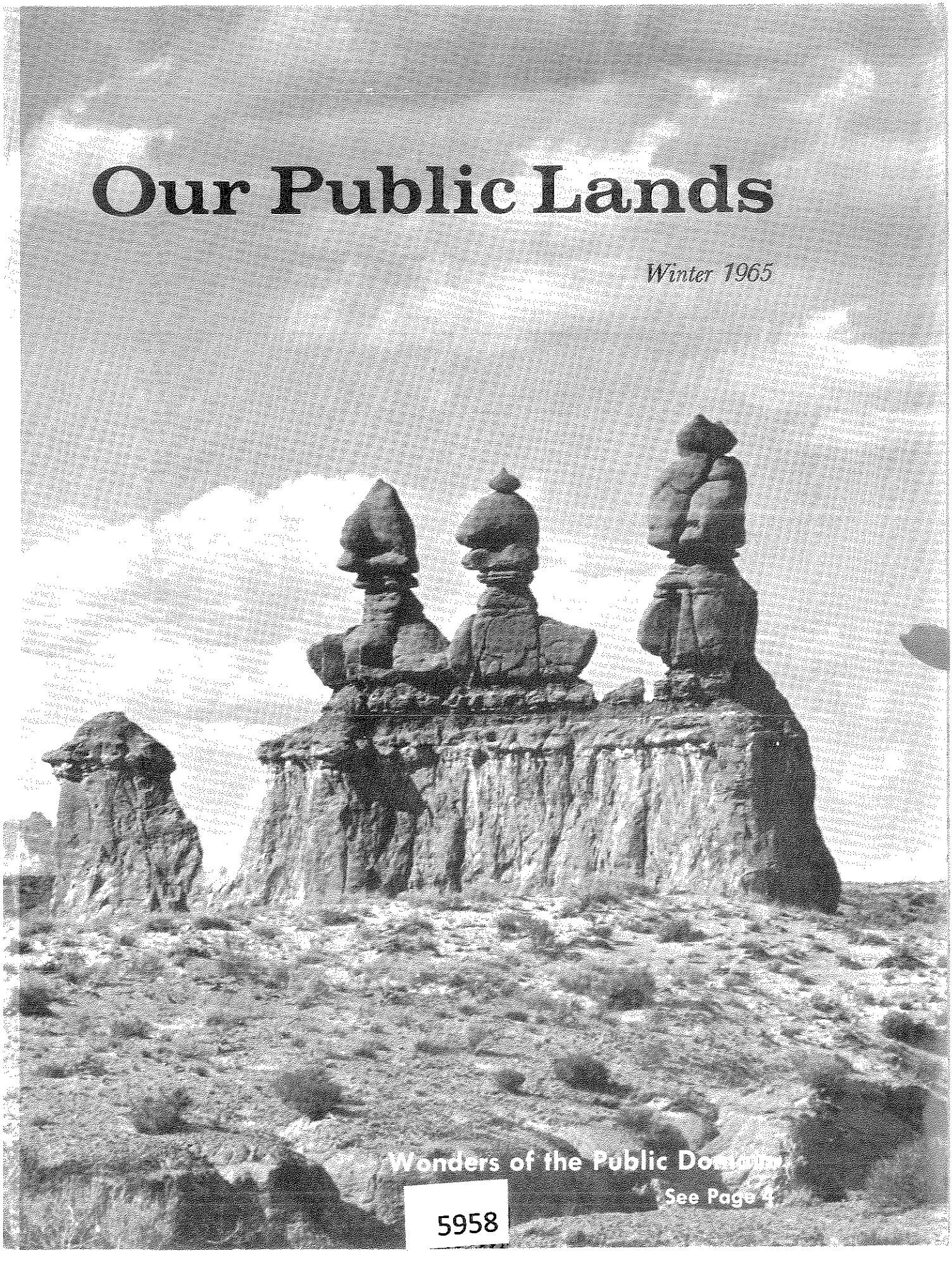
Our Public Lands

Winter 1965



Wonders of the Public Domain

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Our Public Lands

WINTER 1965 VOL. 14, NO. 3

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Cover photo: Goblin Valley, Utah

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Stewart L. Udall, Secretary
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Charles H. Stoddard, Director

Created in 1849, the Department of the Interior—a Department of Conservation—is concerned with the management, conservation, and development of the Nation's water, wildlife, mineral, forest, and park and recreational resources. It also has major responsibilities for Indian and Territorial affairs.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department works to assure that nonrenewable resources are conserved for the future, and that renewable resources make their full contribution to the progress, prosperity, and security of the United States—now and in the future.

Issued quarterly by
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Washington, D.C. 20240

The printing of this publication has been approved by the Director of the Bureau of the Budget, February 14, 1963.

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 20402. Price 15 cents (single copy). Subscription price 60 cents a year, 25 cents additional for foreign mailing.

OUR PUBLIC LANDS is the official publication of the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior. Issued four times yearly in January, April, July, and October.

Dan Saults, Information Officer and Assistant to the Director.

Ed. Kerr, Editor.

The Truth About Public Land Sales

Judging from recent nation-wide promotional schemes, the gun has sounded on the greatest "free public land" bonanza since the Oklahoma Land Rush.

The ballyhoo proclaims that Federal lands have been opened up to homesteading and that fertile acreage is waiting for all who are long on desire but short on cash. The cost? Why, it's free for the asking, or little more than the cost of the paperwork—or so the promoters claim. And the promoters offer a printed list of such land offerings in return for a certain fee.

Free land schemes are nothing new. Such hope bubbles have been floated over the land-hungry American public ever since the West was won. And, as always, the Department of the Interior has been forced to explode them.

No Free Land

"There's no such thing as free land—from the government or anybody else," according to Charles H. Stoddard, Director of Interior's Bureau of Land Management, the agency in charge of administering the nation's 460 million acres of public domain.

"Far less than one percent of the lands left in the public domain is suitable for farming," he said, "so homesteading is almost a thing of the past. And when public lands are sold to the public, they are sold at the fair market price, mostly at public auction."

Stoddard pointed out that notices of public land sales are available at the Bureau's state land offices. Any citizen interested in sale notices can be placed on the mailing list free of charge by simply writing to the appropriate land office, he said.

Many citizens have already found this out, to their chagrin. A California man who bought such a list from an "information company" traveled hundreds of miles to look at a tract which interested him. Upon arrival, he found that the land had been in State ownership for many years. A Montana rancher discovered that the tract he picked from purchased literature was part of South Dakota's Fort Meade Military Reservation!

Names Sound Official

Several of the promotion companies now operating give themselves an official aura by using words like U.S., Federal or Public in their names, words which imply governmental status. Some have even set up offices in Washington to enhance the illusion. Thousands of people, many believing they are dealing with a Federal agency, have responded with dollars and high hopes that the too-good-to-be is actually true; whereas, in fact, news of the "public land boom" was as startling to the Bureau as it was to the populace.

Stoddard sums up the whole problem with these points for all would-be settlers of the public domain:

- Land is usually sold by the Bureau at public auction, but bidding begins at the appraised fair market value and the land often goes for a much higher figure. These sales are virtually the only means by which private citizens may obtain Federal lands today.
- Virtually all public land is situated in the 11 westernmost contiguous states and Alaska. So, if you are dreaming of a lake site in Florida, for instance, you had better contact a reputable local real estate agent.
- Look before you leap, unless you're a hermit. Many tracts sold by the government are classified as rough and mountainous, hundreds of miles from civilization, devoid of water supply and a day's ride by burro from the nearest road! They are valuable possibly to someone with adjacent nearby land but no bargain for anyone else.

(P.S. See pages 22 and 23 of this issue and all future issues of OPL for the *official* information on public land sales.)

"Psst, Buddy! Want to know about some BIG LAND DEALS?"

By Donald B. Stough,
Resource Planning Specialist,
Washington, D.C.

Wonders of the Public Domain

Combine the National Park and National Forest areas of the United States, then double the entire acreage. It still wouldn't equal the size of the public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. These lands encompass 460 million acres in the West and Alaska—one-fifth the land area of the United States and 60 percent of all lands owned by the Federal Government.

That such an area, especially in the West, could exist without an abundant share of Nature's wonders is almost impossible. Indeed, there should be a larger variety of unspoiled scientific treasures on these "forgotten lands" than exist anywhere else in North America.

Convinced of this, BLM Director Charles H. Stoddard recently initiated a state-by-state search of the entire public domain. The orders were clear: "Find our natural areas and make plans for their protection. They can then be made available for scientific research and in some cases, public viewing."

The preliminary search is now complete, drawing back the curtain on more than 100 fascinating areas—awe-inspiring canyons of varied and chameleon-like colors, towering mesas accessible only by helicopter, endless tundras and rolling sand dunes, old lava flows from now-extinct volcanoes.

Giant Ice Caves

What better example of Nature's mysterious workings could exist, for instance, than the Great Lava Rift of Idaho? Extending for 35 miles from the Craters of the Moon National Monument, this unusual lava formation is underlain with giant ice caves, despite the fact that the area is very hot and dry during the summer.

Another of the more dramatic areas is the massive Slumgullion Mud Flow in Colorado. Here, a very slow but inexorable landslide has moved like soupy concrete down the gently sloping terrain of Slumgullion Creek. Loosened from its moorings long before coming of the white man, it traveled six miles from the edge of Cannibal Mesa into the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River, forming Lake Cristobal. Still on the move, this unusual landslide is covered with forests.

Elsewhere in Colorado, there are deep, wild canyons and wind-sculptured arches covering more than 5,000 acres. A magnificent example is the canyon cut by the Dolores River as it twists through the rock. This area alone encompasses nearly 7,000 acres of scenic wonder, featuring deep canyon walls of multicolored sandstone.

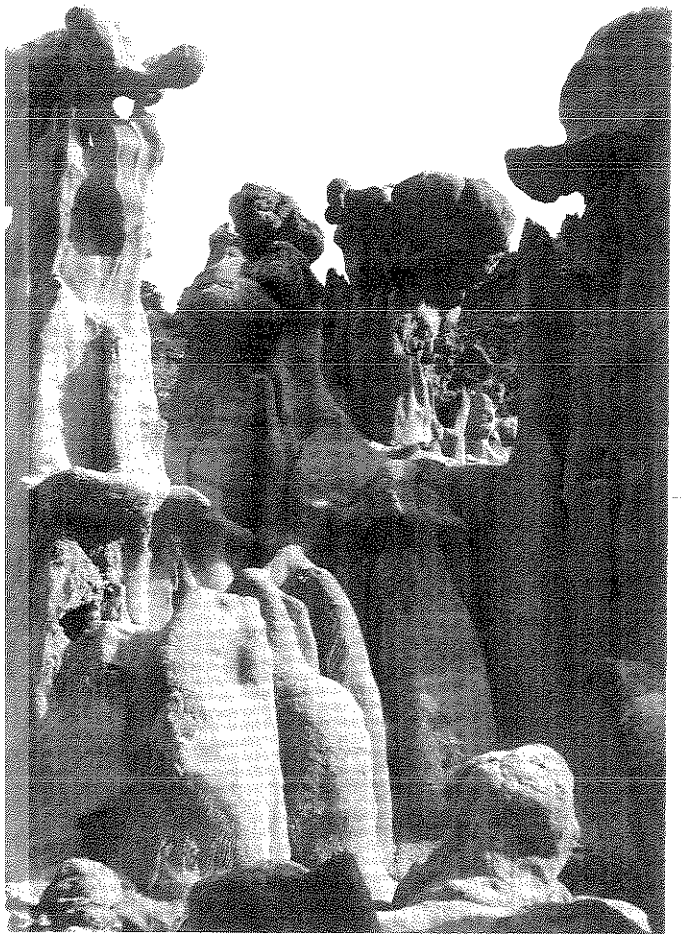
Baker Cypress

Looking for an unusual forest? In northeastern California, a pristine stand of rare Baker cypress remains intact after centuries of geological mishaps, including several lava extrusions that covered the entire area. This forest community, covering 9,000 acres, is the largest of its kind known in the world. Here, the rough broken surface of the lava bed forms a unique ecological affinity with the vegetative cover.

One natural area in California known as the "Alabama Hills" is so scenic that it has become known as "Movie Flats" because of the number of Western movies and television shows that have been photographed in the vicinity. Because some of the oldest rocks in the region are located here, the area is valuable for interpretation of geologic history of the Sierra Nevada-Owens Valley-White Mountain structures.

And in Alaska, 30 miles north of the Arctic Circle, is a 30,000-acre rolling sand dune completely devoid of vegetation. Another tract in Alaska, known as the Nogahabara Sand Dunes, duplicated the combination of rolling terrain and lack of vegetation. This tract is 16,000 acres in size and is located 40 miles south of the Arctic Circle.

Because of the dramatic differences in elevation, rainfall and latitude of the public lands, seven of the nine

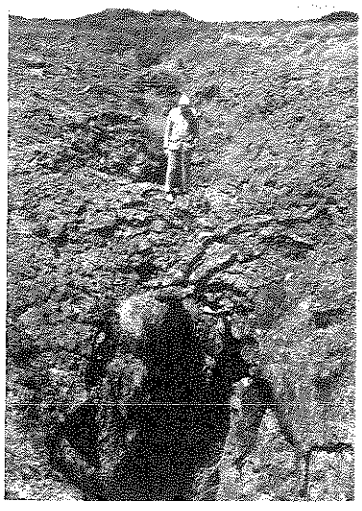


Above: Grotesque figures caused by excessive weathering of sandstone near Book Cliffs in the Grand Junction District of Colorado. They are in the west central portion of the state.

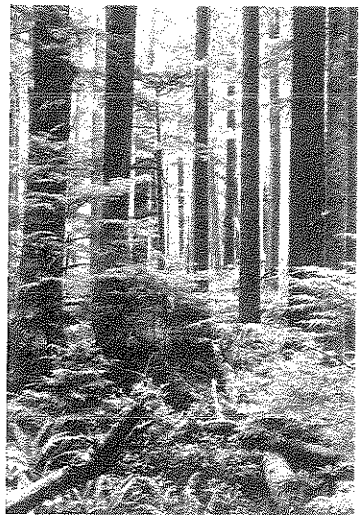
Below: Castle Arch—largest of the many natural arches on the east side of Rattlesnake Canyon in Colorado.

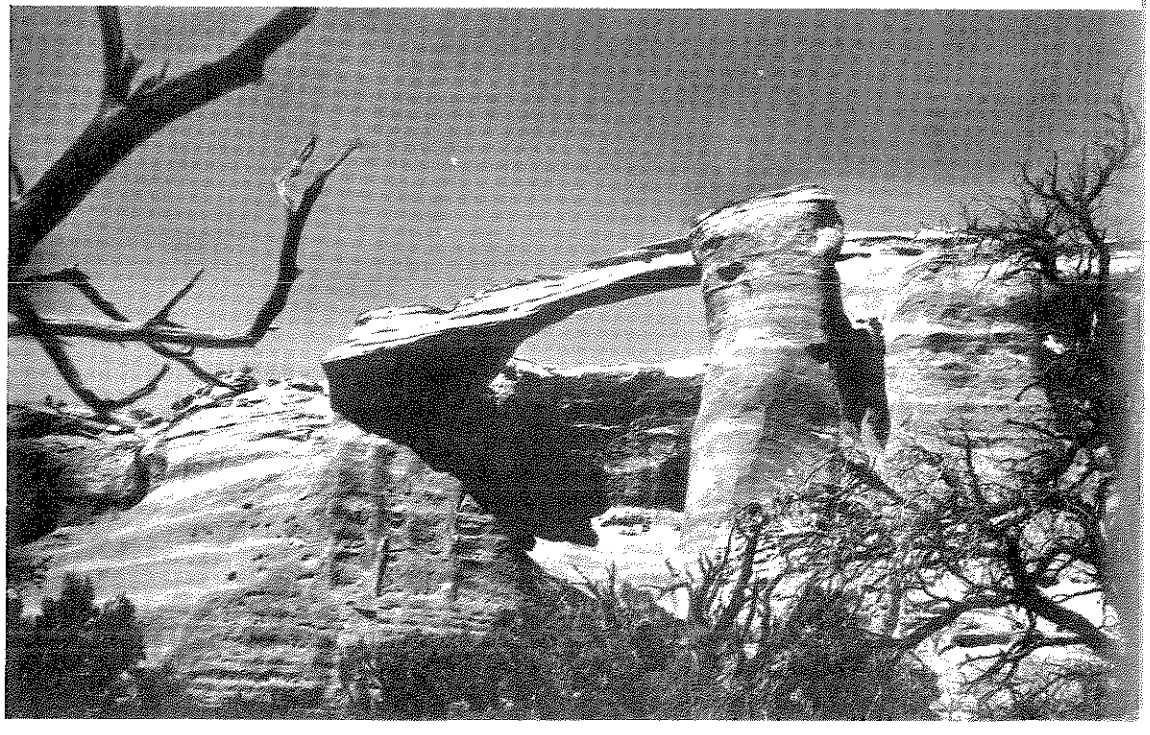
America looks for the first time at the scientific treasures on her "forgotten lands"—and finds some breathtaking attractions!

This is one of the many natural bridges across the Great Lava Rift of Idaho. The ground drops some 110 feet on either side of the bridge formation.



One of the last untapped stands of Douglas fir timber is located in the Coos Bay District of Oregon, a ready-made outdoor laboratory for ecologists.





floristic regions of North America are represented. The lands vary from Death Valley, which is below sea level, to mountain tracts more than 14,000 feet high in Colorado. Annual rainfall varies from less than six inches in parts of Nevada to more than 100 inches in sections of western Oregon, Washington and Alaska. Temperatures range from as high as 120 degrees in the Southwest desert regions to as low as 60 degrees below zero in certain Alaska regions.

Researcher's Mecca

The wide variation of conditions offers unusual opportunities for botanists, zoologists and ecologists to study the striking effects of microclimatic differences. Too, some of the natural areas pose intriguing questions. Why does one grove of white fir grow more than 30 miles from any other trees? Why are several thousand acres of ponderosa pine completely isolated from any other pines of their species in an area of insufficient rainfall? The researcher will find many challenging outdoor laboratories on the public lands.

A rough grouping of the approximately 100 areas so far indicates 12 fields of study: archeology, geology, unusual forest types, grass and forb types, hydrology, extreme range of species, relict species, shrub types, rare species, vegetative transition zones and zoology. Many areas, of course, lend themselves to multiple research possibilities. Although sand dunes are classified under geology, for example, the vegetative cover on many of them would lead to ecological research.

All the natural areas unveiled are too numerous to describe in detail, but here is a peek at those of major interest, by classification:

ARCHEOLOGY

In Wyoming a half section of land with much petrified forest remains in the grassland, and many artifacts in the steep and gently rolling topography. Study of these petrified remains will add much information to the climatic factors which existed in the prehistoric past. Four other sites of archeological interest are listed, including a petroglyph location in Wyoming, and Indian artifacts in Oregon and Nevada.

GEOLOGY

A wide range of types is offered in the field of geology, including eight sand dune sites in seven states. The study of sand dunes has barely been touched. No one knows whether we are coming into a new glacial age or leaving one far behind. Studies of groups of dunes widely scattered geographically may furnish clues to this problem.

One of the areas, a 1,200 acre tract in Utah, is selected for the grouping of beautiful coral dunes which have covered vegetation and fences and can be seen for miles.

In Arizona, a beautiful 10-mile canyon of a living stream winds through the Sonoran Desert Mountain.

Colorado has examples of Rock Glaciers, one containing 40 acres with a 320-acre buffer zone. The area has a system of dikes which are from 20–40 feet in width and resistant to erosion, standing as vertical walls 40 to 50 feet above the surrounding country. In the same area a terminal moraine of over 900 acres shows all of the ridges, mounds, sand, and irregular masses originally transported by a glacier.

Some 25 other areas of primary geological interest are part of the public domain, including volcanic cones, pronounced geological fault lines, anticlines, and striking peaks. Each of these is valuable for the study of erosion, earthquakes and soil changes.

GRASS AND FORB TYPES AND RELICT SPECIES

In Idaho, there are 160 acres of high desert native grassland association, practically untouched by domestic stock. The butte location is completely surrounded by broken lava.

In Colorado 435 acres of high tableland (8,800 feet elevation) with 17 native grasses make a fine range research area. These and a dozen other unique grassland areas of the West have been located.

An island in Oregon has been withdrawn because of its stand of old-growth Oregon myrtle.

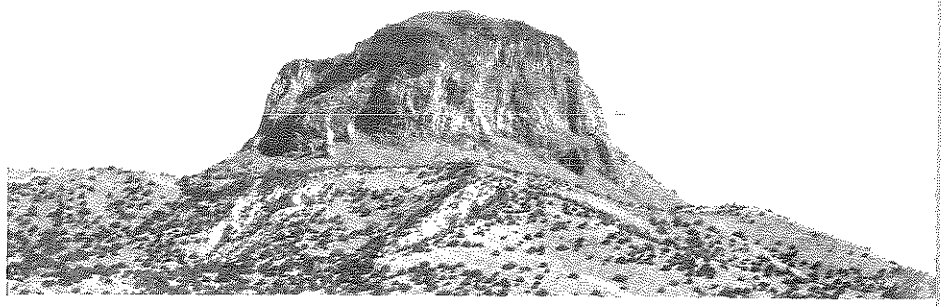
In Utah, two high ungrazed mesas of 5,000 and 3,000 acres surrounded by precipitous cliffs, have relict stands of pinon pine and juniper and sagebrush and grass species in climax state.

FOREST TYPES

In Oregon 200 acres of the relatively rare Brewer spruce have been spotted in the southwestern part of the state. This area contains many other species such as Douglas fir, sugar pine, western white pine, incense cedar, Port Orford cedar, white fir and Shasta red fir. The understory consists mainly of Pacific yew, vine maple, rhododendron, salal, and manzanita.

Engleman spruce and Colorado blue spruce—a high-country mixture—are found over a site of some 400 acres in Idaho.

And in California two rare cypress groves have been reported. In one part of the state are 1,000 acres of rare Piute cypress, while more than 500 miles away 1,500 acres of Baker cypress trees are growing on lava material, a most unusual geological-ecological phenomenon.



Looking east toward Cabezon Peak in New Mexico, located about 40 miles southwest of Cuba.

Upper ridge forms one of the scenic cockscombs to be found in the Kanab District of Utah. Such areas are valuable for geologic studies.

HYDROLOGY

A relicted lake shoreline in Nevada shows successive levels of wave action on about 100 acres of land. Another "Continental Lake" area of 2,300 acres is distinguished by the rapid fluctuation of its shorelines.

EXTREME RANGE OF SPECIES

A section of pinyon pine-Joshua tree transition zones has been pinpointed in Nevada, with the Joshua trees growing in a region normally beyond their climatic range.

An extension of the California hardwood type has been found on 40 acres far in southwestern Utah!

SHRUB TYPES

Utah also has an isolated mesa of 1,000 acres, accessible only by one rough trail, with a fine stand of Epredra (Mexican or Mormon Tea) and *Hilaria Jamesii*. Another Utah site contains more than 1,300 acres of *Atriplex canescens* and *Stipa comata* which had not been grazed for many years until 1963–64 and is changed very little.

Wyoming has a section of Northern Desert Shrub—a sagebrush group of big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, thickspike and western wheatgrass, Indian ricegrass, and associated forbs. Thirteen other areas of this type are listed in Colorado, California, Nevada and Utah.

RARE SPECIES

Eighty acres of a unique, almost pure stand of Jeffrey pine is located in Western Oregon.

In Arizona an unusual hybridization of Turbinella and Gambel oak is found on a 240-acre tract, mixed with other species. The botanists are interested in finding how this cross occurred.

A well preserved stand of over 1,900 acres of Joshua trees in Nevada, is another addition to the list. The same state has a quarter section of Bristlecone pine with a stocking of 50–60 percent. The Bristlecone pine reaches a greater age than any other plant species with individual trees over 4,000 years old. Botanists have a tremendous interest in climatological research aimed at determining the causes of this extreme longevity.

VEGETATIVE ZONES

In northwest Arizona a large tract with extreme variations in elevations includes species from desert shrub to high cliff types. In Mohave County, a meeting of lower and upper Sonoran desert zones is found, along with interesting boulder outcrops.

In Oregon 5,000 acres of ponderosa pine are growing in a zone where no other groves of this type are found.

A Colorado tract of 18,000 acres also shows the varied vegetation from low desert to high mountain types. This area is almost ideal for studying the rapidity with which ecological changes in plant and animal life are brought about with changes in topography.

ZOOLOGY

An unusual area in Colorado is valuable for its population of rare lizards and snakes. The rare Leopard lizard (*Crotaphytus Wislizeni*) is found here. It is the only area in the state where *Sceloporus magister*, the Desert Spiney Lizard, and *Hypsiglena torguoto*, the night snake, are found.

As the number of adult students of the natural sciences increases, these outdoor laboratories will be used increasingly. Students engaged in research work can obtain information on their locations by inquiring at any BLM district or state office.

But a note of caution for visitors: Most of these areas are primitive and off the beaten track. Before setting forth into the Western hinterlands to visit these sites, be sure to get sufficient information about locations, roads and other conditions from state BLM offices.

And brush up on your map reading. Some of these areas lay undiscovered for eons. Authorities don't want this to happen to you!

Search for the Masked Bobwhite

HAS the masked bobwhite whistled its last call in the Southwest?

The answer depends on an all-out search now being spearheaded by the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. To the knowledge of Lew Walker, associate museum director, not one of the species is left in the United States but there may be some in Mexico.

Until last summer, the museum had 30 of the rare game birds in captivity and was making progress propagating the species. Then, in August, three Papago Indian boys broke into the pens during the night and had a feast. The remainder of the birds critically wounded themselves by crashing into the cages.

A subspecies of the common quail found throughout the United States, the masked bobwhite is the only member of the bobwhite family ever to exist in the desert regions of the Southwest. The male bird is distinguished by a mahogany breast and black facial mask, while its female counterpart closely resembles the eastern bobwhite in color, although slightly smaller in size.

Once Was Abundant

Ironically, ancestors of the Papago Indian youths considered the masked bobwhite a sacred diety. Because of this and the superb habitat in southern Arizona 60 years ago, the bird once was abundant through its narrow population range. But prolonged droughts and cattle drives soon stripped the land of fertile cover and the bobwhite seemingly disappeared.

It wasn't until 1927 that hope emerged for reestablishing the species. Les Woodell, an American rancher with land holdings in Mexico, accidentally flushed a covey near Magdalena that year and collected five birds. He sent them to his friend Griffing Bancroft, a noted California zoologist. Bancroft immediately recognized them as the long-lost masked bobwhite and dropped everything to race for Mexico and join his friend.

Bancroft and Woodell made an intensive search of the surrounding country, but could find no further sign of the bandit-faced birds. Dejected, they wandered into Magdalena for lunch, stopping at a restaurant run by "Jerry the Greek." Their eyes brightened as they noted the menu listed wild birds. Checking the small pens where Jerry kept his trapped birds, Bancroft and Woodell were amazed to find several masked bobwhite quail.

The two Americans hastily fumbled out sufficient cash to save them from the broiler. It was from this small sample of birds that scientists obtained their first hatch of eggs.

When this photo was taken, there was still hope of propagating the masked bobwhite species. Fred J. Weiler, Arizona BLM director, and Lewis W. Walker, associate director of the Arizona–Sonora Desert Museum, are watching a young male.

Early Attempts Failed

For nearly a decade thereafter, conservationists and biologists tried to reestablish the beautiful masked bobwhite in Arizona. Although heartened by occasional successes, all attempts ultimately failed. Conditions just weren't the same as those existing before the coming of the white man.

A noted conservationist and author, J. Stokley Ligon, achieved the greatest measure of success. Sleuthing

By Robert B. Whitaker,
Resource Utilization Specialist, Phoenix, Arizona

Three little Indian boys
Broke into a pen
And ate twenty quail birds...
Leaving only ten.

Ten frightened quail birds
Flying on the run
Crashed into the cage wire . . .
Then there were none.

Elaborate system of retention dams and dikes brought on head-high growths of native grasses at the masked bobwhite project near Tucson. Such grasses provide needed cover.

in a manner that would do justice to Sherlock Holmes, he and members of the Arizona and New Mexico game and fish departments made several expeditions to Old Mexico checking cactus wren nests for telltale breast feathers. They even used a loud-speaker system to amplify tape recorded calls of the masked bobwhite in areas where they thought some might still exist.

Ligon's efforts were teamed with Lewis Walker, associate director of the world-famous Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum in Tucson, who also was vitally interested in saving the beautiful masked species.

The two chased rumors across much of Sonora, finally locating and trapping 20 birds in a secluded canyon some 100 miles south of the border town of Nogales.

Crash Program

With financial help from the Allegheny Foundation in Pittsburgh, Pa., Walker spearheaded a crash program in a do-or-die attempt to obtain eggs and return the masked bobwhite to Arizona.

He approached the U.S. Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Land Management in 1961 for assistance in obtaining land which closely approximated terrain where the birds once abounded, and which could be restored to some degree of the primitive era "when grass was so high it swept a horse's belly."

Response came instantaneously. Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall, a native Arizonan, sounded a "Let's go" cry, and Fred J. Weiler, BLM Arizona Director, worked tirelessly in reserving a section of public land for a range management project that would transform barren wastes into rich grasslands.

The land selected was an isolated tract near Tucson. It bore all the characteristics of former masked bobwhite habitat—except for the grass.

Now, Walker went to work. Construction began on a network of dams that would catch runoff and divert it to seeded areas, putting an end to "gully-washer" flash floods. As controlling levees took effect and stopped erosion, Walker erected breeding cages to hold the prize birds.

Soon, grass shoots sprang up where it never before seemed possible. The new growth did best within the breeding cages, where fine mesh wire kept out destructive rodents. A flood nearly wiped the project out in 1963, but the rare birds survived along with the first successful hatch of eggs to appear in this newest of game preserves.

Bitter Feast

Then, with the midsummer's night feast, all the hard work and the $18,000 investment that went into raising a brood stock of two dozen adult birds and an annual hatch of some 40 eggs, came to a bitter end.

The charcoaled remains of a primitive fire and some scattered bones told the tragic tale.

Today, Lew Walker is again pounding the trail in search of funds to finance a new masked bobwhite project, his disappointment being tempered by encouragement coming from the Bureau of Land Management and many interested wildlife agencies, including the National Audubon Society.

Those who know Lew Walker best are confident that this determined conservationist will find both birds and the financing to finish the job he started, and bring the cheerful call of the bobwhite echoing again through the rolling hills of southern Arizona.

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Straight-from-the-fireline report on the worst fire blowup in Nevada's history —and the mammoth rebuilding job that followed

Tiger by the Tail!

By Robert E. Wilber,
Resource Utilization Specialist, Reno, Nevada

Crews of dirty men trooped in and out of the camp. As soon as a man off the line sat down, he was asleep. Amid the sleeping men, other men worked. Hard hats, the firefighter's symbol, never came off. Everyone wore them.

All the time a shortwave radio snapped, crackled, and "talked" in the background.

"We're having trouble with whirlwinds on the north end of this sector—can you send us some bentonite?"

"Palisades, can you spare any men or equipment for Boulder RIGHT NOW?"

". . . . . two loads of bentonite just left the Elko Airport."

Around the radio and among the sleeping men, other men—called "overhead personnel"—worked. They poured over maps and papers, discussed coordinaiton of men and equipment, charted the progress of the fire, and directed questions or answers at the radio operator.

Worst in History

Time and again last August this scene was repeated in fire camps scattered over a 4,000 square mile chunk of northern Nevada range as the worst fires in the state's history ran amok through acre after acre of grass, sagebrush, juniper, and pinyon.

Across the nation newspapers told the story of devastation. Their lead paragraphs read like articles from the war years.

"Much of northeastern Nevada was under war-like mobilization today in efforts to stem the tide of massive range fires," said the Reno Evening Gazette.

"Air Force personnel and equipment joined 2,000 firefighters today in an all-out attempt to quell the biggest range fire in Nevada history," said the Chicago Tribune.

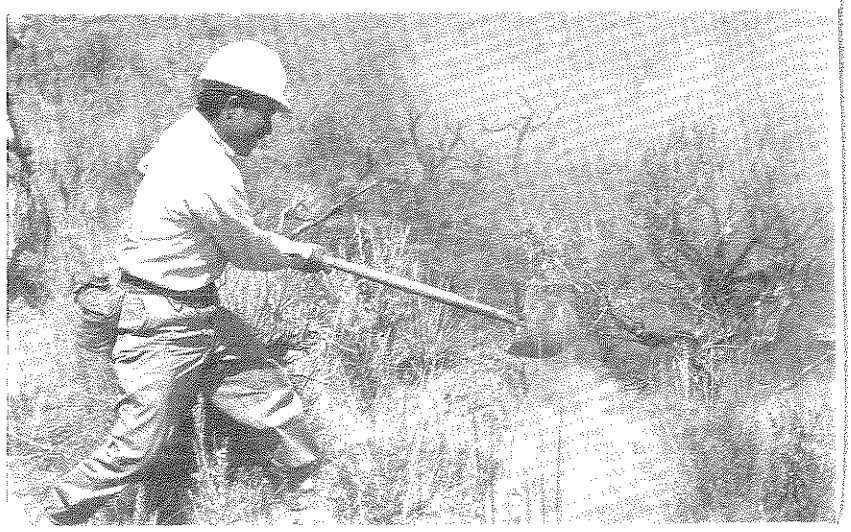
"Reinforced fire crews battled to save threatened ranches Tuesday as six major fires raced through miles of northeastern Nevada range land," said the Deseret News, Salt Lake City.

Caused by Lightning

It all started when a dry lightning storm swept across tinder dry northern Nevada on the afternoon of August 15. By 4:00 p.m., 30 fires had been reported to the Bureau of Land Management and by evening 160,000 acres were ablaze.

In the next few hours BLM officials in Nevada put together one of the biggest fire fighting organizations on record. From seven states they rounded up 2,300 professional firefighters and backed them up with tons of steel, including 23 planes, 18 helicopters, 64 crawler tractors, 22 pumper trucks, and 215 vehicles.

The logistics of the battle was staggering. The BLM fire headquarters in Elko was as hectic a post as any on or off of the fire lines. Telephones were always ringing or tied up with conversations. The big shortwave radio used to dispatch men and equipment to the fires was in constant operation. Men in boots and beards hurried from radio to map to telephone to radio. Clerks took notes, compared notes, and wrote reports.



With 2300 firefighters on the lines, there were only three serious injuries. This was attributed to the exclusive use of professionals.

Gallons of black coffee were poured down parched throats in the hopes that it would prop open tired eyes and stimulate weary minds.

The struggle between men and their machines and nature at its worst went on for five days. The weather was perfect for fire—hot, dry, and windy. The flames spread at phenomenal rates. One fire north of Elko consumed 10,000 acres in two hours. When a BLM radio operator asked the pilot of a reconnaissance plane where the front of a fire was he replied, "How do I know—I can't catch up with it!"

Fire fighters were plagued with whirlwinds which would suck up hot coals and fling them far across hard-won fire lines. Birds and animals also spread the flames.

Bird on Fire

BLM pumper crew chief Matt Trontel told of watching a bird try to fly away from a fire. "He flapped his wings as hard as he could, but kept losing ground as the tremendous wind was sucked toward the flames. Then all of a sudden he was a burst of flame!"

By the third day of the fires BLM had a complete air operations organization going. The Elko Municipal Airport was closed down to all but fire fighting traffic. It was reported that on August 18 more air traffic passed through the Elko airport than it did through the Los Angeles International Airport.

World War II bombers, converted to drop fire retardants, streamed in and out of the airport. Big transports brought in fire fighters from all over the West. Light reconnaissance planes and helicopters were everywhere.

BLM fire control officer Bob Carroll of Elko logged many an hour in a wind-buffeted light plane above the flames. A two-way radio connected his plane with the BLM fire control headquarters in Elko and with the fire camps.

He charted the progress of the fires and relayed the information to the ground, suggesting where fire lines should go and where bentonite should be dropped. Bentonite is a sloshy, mud-like fire retardant made from clay. About 300,000 gallons were dropped on the Elko fires.

One of the bentonite fliers was Chuck Destree of the Nevada Forestry Department. He piloted an old Navy torpedo bomber with a 600-gallon load weighing 18,780 pounds. Flying a little above stalling speed Destree would let the bentonite go about 75 feet above the fire and a little ahead of the flames.

"Sure it's dangerous," he says. "I used to worry about it . . . eight years ago."

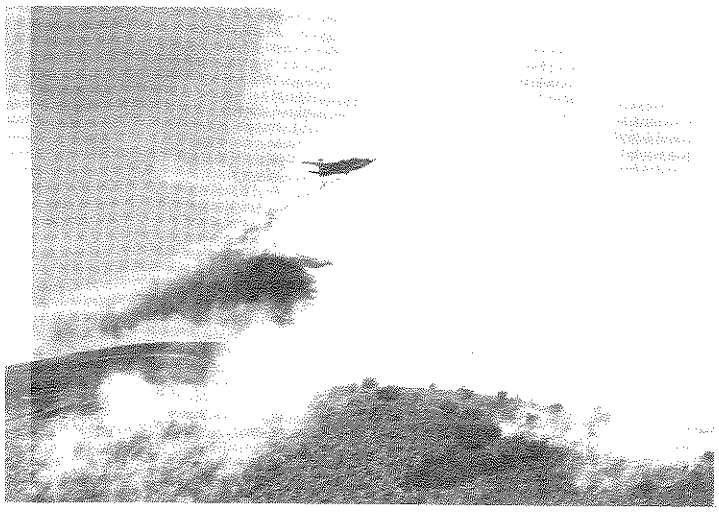
Fire 'Dead Out'

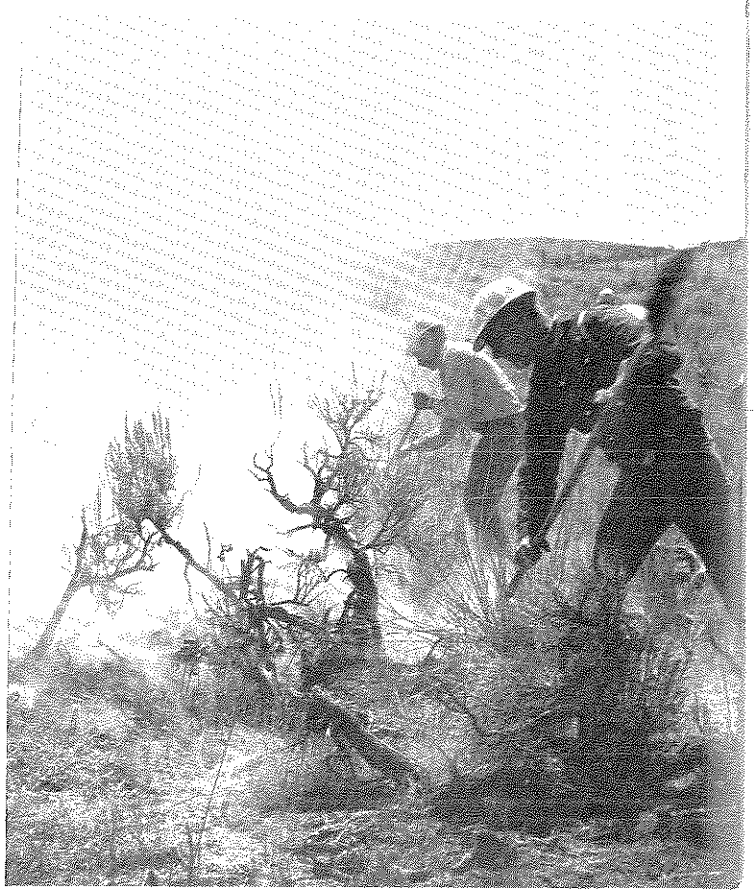
At noon on August 20—five grueling days after it started—the fire was out. Now the real work began. Even before the fires were out two BLM men—Clair Whitlock, Elko District Manager, and Russ Penny, Nevada State Director—were on the phone lining up range management technicians and engineers for a rehabilitation program.

Penny asked the Nevada Air National Guard to photograph the burns. They quickly complied, using the latest military photo mapping jet aircraft. BLM used helicopters to mark out section corners with large X's of white muslin. Later the X's showed clearly on the Air Guard photo maps.

Below: Converted World War II bomber drops a load of bentonite—a sloshy, mud-like material made from clay and water—ahead of the flames.

Right: More than 300,000 acres burned during the five grueling days of the Elko fire.





Some of BLM's top men in Nevada, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, and New Mexico were called in to survey the damage and work up a rehabilitation plan. It was a fight against time. The oncoming fall and winter held threat of flooding and erosion. There was danger that the denuded range would be invaded by toxic weeds and undesirable annual grasses.

Meetings were held immediately with ranchers hit by the fires. Other Federal and State conservation agencies were called on to lend assistance.

The Awful Toll

It took the BLM rehab team about ten days to survey the damage and they reported that 69,000 acres of private land and 72,000 acres of public land should be reseeded to perennial grasses. Included in the public land acreage was 5,500 acres of bitter brush seeding for wildlife food. In addition, 49 miles of private land fencing and 121 miles of public land fencing would be needed to protect the seedings.

Watershed protection would require 19,000 acres of contour ripping, 158,000 cubic yards of check dams, 35,000 cubic yards of water spreading dikes, 639,000 cubic yards of detention dams, and 43,000 cubic yards of firebreak checks.

BLM diverted $546,000 from its national fire rehabilitation funds to get the program started and Congress appropriated an additional $948,000 to complete it.

Three weeks after the fires were out, BLM had tractors and giant grass seed drills rolling across the scorched earth.

A half million pounds of grass seed, mostly crested wheat grass and intermediate wheat grass, and 8,000 pounds of bitter brush seed were purchased to do the job.

Everyone Cooperated

Elko area ranchers cooperated with BLM all the way. Some of the fires burned through a checkerboard pattern of private-public land ownership. In three cases land exchanges were worked out between BLM and private ranchers to speed the program and in all other cases the ranchers entered into cooperative agreements with the Bureau.

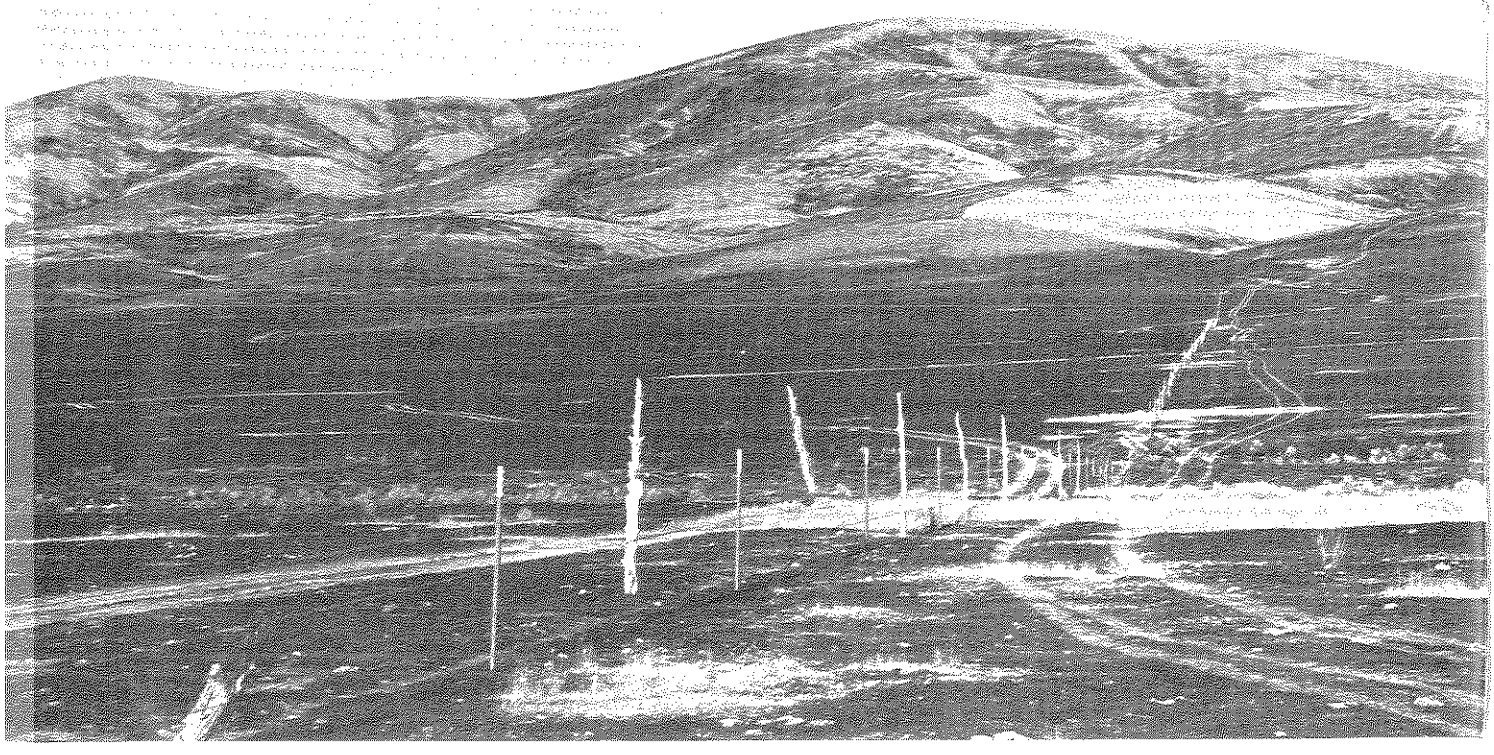
The Idaho Fish and Game Department loaned BLM a special drill for planting bitter brush seed. Hand planters, most of which were originally designed for corn, were obtained from other sources. The Nevada Youth Training Center in Elko and the Boy Scouts volunteered to help plant the bitter brush. The Nevada Fish and Game Department volunteered to supervise the operation.

"We're racing against time. We're doing a big job awfully fast, but we're also doing it well because everybody has been willing to help out," said Clair Whitlock, Elko District Manager.

Russ Penny hit upon another key factor for success in the race against time when he said, "BLM is used to doing a lot with a little . . . it's the history of the agency."

A lot with a little and a lot of cooperation are binding up Nature's self-inflicted wounds. Now it's up to Nature.

This was the black aftermath of the Elko inferno. Rehabilitation of the range was begun immediately.



The Public Lands— Where Are They?

By Jack Bryant,
Resource Utilization Specialist, Cheyenne, Wyoming

"There's a good camping spot, but is it private land or public land?"

"Looks like good antelope country. Maybe it's public land and we can hunt it. How can we tell?"

These are common questions, asked every day by thousands of people who travel or vacation somewhere out West. Their vacation land of some 176 million acres of public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management is spread across the eleven western states; but where is it? And how does one distinguish it from millions of acres of the same type of land that is privately owned?

The Bureau of Land Management is doing something about it—not just one thing, but many. They are all aimed at making public lands easier to find, for camping, hunting, hiking, fishing, rock collecting, or for just plain sightseeing.

Free Map

Take Wyoming, where about one-third of the state is public land, some 18 million acres scattered irregularly and intermixed with private land throughout the state. BLM has put out a free map showing generally where the 32 million acres of Federal and State public lands in Wyoming are located. BLM-managed public land, national forests and grasslands, national wildlife refuges, national parks, state wildlife acres, state public land and fishing access areas are shown in color. All public land tracts over 320 acres in size are included. Highways, towns, cities, rivers, streams and reservoirs are also shown, so that a person can easily find on the map where he is.

Small maps also show general areas of the state where mule, deer, elk, bear, antelope, moose, big horn sheep, chukar, sage grouse and waterfowl may be found Larger scale maps, showing public lands down to 40 acres in size, are now being prepared for smaller areas of the state. These maps will also be distributed free to the public.

Second, BLM is working with ranchers to make available vast areas of mixed public and private lands for public recreation. With the start of the hunting season last fall, close to 700,000 acres of mixed public and private land north and east of Rawlins, Wyoming, were made available for public hunting. The boundary of this cooperative area and its access roads were posted by BLM as being open to public recreation use.

Response to this joint effort has been most favorable from both ranchers and sportsmen. As a result, the door has been opened for many more such private-public programs throughout the state. Each year the hunter and fisherman will have a broader choice of lands and waters where he can hunt and fish.

Identification Signs

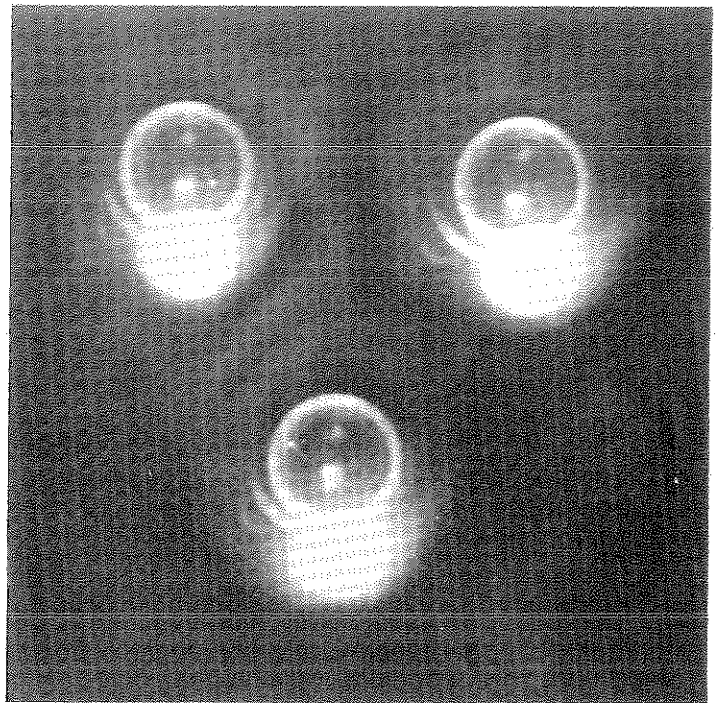
Third, small aluminum signs are being hung on public land fences. These 4-inch diameter disks read "United States Public Lands—This Side" and "United States Public Lands—Both Sides." They were first placed on fence gates and, as time allows, are being put along fence lines. Local civic, youth, service, conservation and sportsmen groups are helping.

Frank Miller, left, is shown putting up a sign which states that the private land beyond is open for public recreation. Looking on is Warren J. Gray, BLM Rawlins district manager and A. D. Fulton, another cooperator in the program.

Large yellow metal information signs are also being posted at key points in public land areas to show the mileage to access roads and gates, public recreation sites and points of interest. Legends stating "Public and Private Lands Beyond this Sign are Open to Public Recreation" and "Entering Public Lands" are lettered on still a different type of sign.

BLM's posting program is one of the first steps in accommodating multiple use demands on the public domain. It will be continued until all areas are properly identified. Then, the public lands will be not only "open to public use" as they are now, but they will be usable as well.

BLM surveyors speed up projects by working in the dark!



Flying saucer formation? Not quite. It's the "face" of BLM prism-filled reflector used with a Geodimeter at night to measure distances in photogrammetry.

"Night People" of the Public Lands

BLM surveyors at work. Solar attachment, the slanting object seen on the transit, speeds work and cuts costs in wooded areas.

By Doyle Kline,
Resource Utilization Specialist,
Santa Fe, N. Mex.

SPOOKY lights in the New Mexico hills recently prompted reports of unidentified flying objects and, no doubt, visions of mysterious beings from other planets. But if someone had located these "Martians" and said "Take me to your leader," the journey would have taken him to the office of Charles H. Stoddard, director of the Bureau of Land Management.

The unusual lights are a very important tool of BLM's "night people"—the ground surveyors who make use of light beams to measure distances.

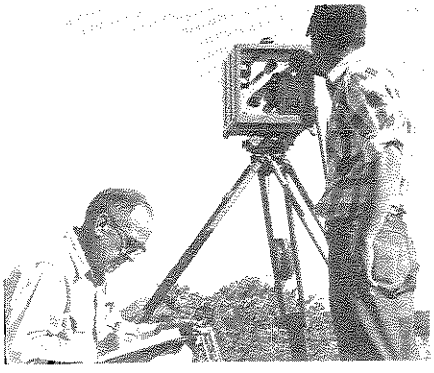
This technique cuts down on errors that come from surface air movements caused by the sun. Some of the light beams are "doctored" by prisms so that only a given wave length comes out. Unlike "normal" light, this "polarized" beam has an unearthly aspect when viewed for the first time, especially by unsuspecting citizens in the back country.

Aerial Photography

This instrument is only one of many innovations used to speed up surveying projects. Aerial camera methods, or photogrammetry as the professionals call it, have been tested extensively by BLM engineers, and found highly accurate when checked on the ground with other instruments. On some broken lands it is faster and thus somewhat cheaper than the usual surface methods. So good are some of today's aerial survey pictures that land measurements have been made that are accurate to within inches.

Such time-saving devices must be employed by BLM whenever possible, due to the nature of its public land surveying responsibilities, which dates back to the original opening of the public lands.

In early U.S. history, in the 13 colonies, lands were claimed and surveyed according to the boundaries of the particular parcels. This was the system followed in Europe but it led to unending disputes in the U.S. Hence, the colonists set up an orderly land survey system—the rectangular system. They also tried to survey lands ahead of settlement, which was something new, aimed at orderly settlement and use.



Geodimeter, the tripodded instrument, sends out beam of polarized light which is reflected by prisms in object against tree. It is most effective at night.

The result was the marking off into one-mile squares of unsettled lands. Land was offered "free" to those who would live on it and farm it. Thus the surveys served not only the tax collectors, but the settlers who wanted to know how much land to claim from the wilderness, and where it was. The rules were that settlers took a certain number of surveyed acres in a block.

The rectangular system is praised throughout the world for its simplicity and usefulness, and for the way it brought about the use of the poorer lands, which they had to take in "blocking up" the better lands.

The rectangular system had another benefit. It gave the United States the best, the simplest and the most complete set of land records in the world.

How System Works

This system marks off the lands into squares. The basic square is a "township," six miles on a side and containing 36 square miles and 23,040 acres.

Townships are arranged in rows. Rows running north and south are called "ranges." The rows of townships and ranges are numbered in sequence.

Each township is divided into 36 smaller squares called "sections." They measure one mile on a side, contain one square mile or 640 acres. Sections can be divided easily into smaller squares. Most homesteaders "took up" a quarter section containing 160 acres. Sections within a township are numbered also.

The legal descriptions of the rectangular system make it possible to locate speedily on a map any piece of property in any state so surveyed. Finding the land in the field is almost as quick.

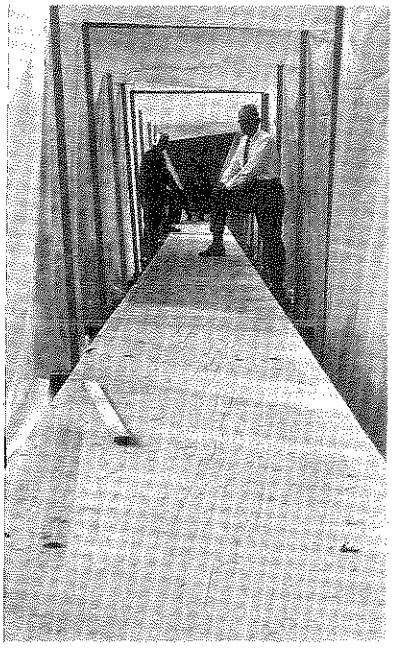
As the early surveys went ahead, section corners were marked by stone monuments, notices stamped in brass, and even by blazing or chipping bark from certain trees. To measure distance between points, surveyors used chains 66 feet long and transits to keep a straight course. The surveyors crossed swamps, climbed mountain, descended gorges, and swam rivers. This is still the basic system for land surveying in the United States.

Even though nearly all settled lands of the U.S. have been surveyed, thousands of acres, especially in Alaska, remain to be covered. So day or night, BLM surveyors are in the field, laying out new grids or resurveying settled areas. But before starting night time operations in a new area nowadays, they assure all residents that no interplanetary attack is about to occur.

Oregonians Set a Big Table

One of the world's longest picnic tables was recently installed at Fisherman's Bend Recreation Site by the Bureau of Land Management.

The all-wood table was constructed using a single piece table top 85 feet long, 30½ inches wide and 3 inches thick. It will be mounted on wooden legs, sanded smooth and finished with clear epoxy resin to show off the beautiful wood grain.



The jumbo picnic table was kept under a plastic cover until sanding and finishing was completed. Assistant Secretary of the Interior John Carver is seen in the foreground.

Located in the center of the group picnic area, the table is expected to be a focal point for large group use and to attract considerable attention from local and out-of-state visitors.

The 85-foot, one piece table top was one of five planks cut from a single Douglas-fir tree harvested from the south end of Benton County. The table tops were cut on order of Ralph Hull, owner of Hull-Oakes Lumber Company of Dawson, Oregon. Hull presented the table top as a gift to the Bureau of Land Management for use at Fishermen's Bend.

Shown on the work weekend are Gaba Agao and George Borrup, shoveling dirt while Bill Mabbutt steadies the locust tree.

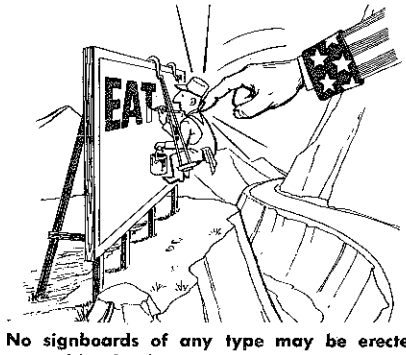
Boise Personnel Hold "Planting Bee"

When lack of funds prevented the Boise, Idaho district from hiring tree planters on the Beggs Recreation Site recently, district personnel decided to employ ingenuity instead. They held a combination weekend outing and "tree planting bee," wtih more than 40 volunteers, including friends of employees, signing up for the job.

It was not exactly a perfect day for a picnic with the family, either. The volunteers were greeted by an early-morning snow, followed by icy temperatures and threatening skies. But, thanks to their determination, recreationists of Idaho one day will have shade on the Beggs site.

Keith Patterson of Station KTVB–TV saw a news story in the event, calling attention to "Government employees who worked on their own time so the public can play!"

LAW of the LAND



No signboards of any type may be erected on public lands without a special permit from the Bureau of Land Management.

When "Scrip" Was In Its Heyday

By Dorothy McDonnell, *Writer-Editor, Washington, D.C.*

Mounted in a corner of the Interior Department's museum is an aged document granting Captain Abraham Lincoln of the Illinois Militia 120 acres of public land for his services in the Black Hawk War. Nearby are similar papers issued to John Paul Jones for service in the Continental Navy, to Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee for service in the Mexican War.

These historic figures are among thousands of individuals who over the past 150 years have claimed a total of about 65 million acres of public land with rights called "scrip." Generally speaking, scrip was the promise of a certain public land acreage in payment for services rendered the government.

Today, only 390 claims totalling about 11,000 acres remain on record with the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management. BLM administers public land that will satisfy these rights.

Deadline 1970

In order to close the books on outstanding scrip, Congress has passed a law requiring redemption of all claims, except the variety known as "soldiers' additional homestead rights," by 1970. The exception, issued to Union soldiers of the Civil War, is the only type redeemable in Alaska; the time limit for this type is 1975.

By far the most numerous scrip issued were military bounty land warrants. Though records on this type of scrip were permanently closed by the Secretary of the Interior in December, 1963, its predominance in the history of scrip deserves attention.

It is estimated that 61 million acres of land, including some of the nation's prime farmland, were settled with military bounty land warrants. Although the warrants were issued to soldiers and veterans, historians agree that few soldiers actually received the benefits of their claims. Great numbers of warrants were bought up and used by speculators to their own ends.

Of Iowa's total area of 36 million acres, it is estimated that settlers claimed 14 million acres with military bounty land warrants. Large areas of Illinois, Missouri, and other Mississippi Valley States were settled in the same way.

Began in Colonial Days

The practice of paying soldiers with public land dates back in American history to colonial days. As early as 1646, Virginia gave 100 acres to the commander of a palisaded settlement at Middle Plantation (now Williamsburg), and other military men of the time were similarly compensated for their services.

The practice continued as the colonies expanded and needed soldiers living on the frontier to defend outlying settlements.

And soon the newly independent United States, whose land area far exceeded its treasury's funds, needed armies to defend itself. Land was an agreeable reward for service, in the eyes of both the government and the potential settler who could serve or who had served as a soldier.

Military bounty land warrants were issued under a series of laws between 1776 and 1855. They were offered first as an inducement to enlistment. Then in the 1850's, warrants were offered to reward soldiers "of every rank, in every branch of the service" for all wars from the Revolutionary to and including the Mexican War. The general act of 1855, awarded land warrants of 160 acres to any soldier, or his heirs, who had served for longer than 14 days in any war after 1790 (a year later Revolutionary soldiers were included). With passage of the Homestead Act of 1862, Congress stopped issuing bounty land warrants.

Gerard Scrip

All scrip was issued by acts of Congress. Some acts applied to many people; others, to an individual case, such as that of Joseph Gerard. The Act of February 10, 1855 authorized each of Gerard's three children to acquire one section of public land; their father had died while performing patriotic services as a messenger to hostile Indians of the then Northwest Territory. Today, 440 acres of Gerard Special Certificates remain to be satisfied.

The last scrip issued was in 1927. Thus, as illustrated by the Gerard scrip, claims remaining on the BLM's records have been handed down for generations, or sold and resold, until, finally, this phase of American history is about to close.

For your information . . .

A List of BLM Publications Available to the Public

Single copies of the following publications are available upon request from the Bureau of Land Management State Offices (addresses listed below) or from the Information Office, Bureau of Land Management, Washington, D.C., 20240, as indicated.

Prices indicate publications that are for sale by the Superintendent of Documents; U.S. Government Printing Office; Washington, D.C., 20402. Single copies of sale publications listed are available free upon request to the BLM Information Office, Washington, D.C., 20240, unless otherwise stated.

Bureau Activities

WASHINGTON, D.C.:

Introducing BLM. History and activities of the Bureau of Land Management told briefly. 12 pp.

Our Public Lands. Illustrated popularly written quarterly magazine reporting on latest developments in public land conservation; contains material of historical and educational value. (Year's subscription for 60¢ from Superintendent of Documents)

Public Land Statistics. Annual statistical report on BLM land and activities; special section on all federally owned land. 198 pp. (Available only from Superintendent of Documents; 75¢.)

Public Lands Bibliography. Bibliography listing most of the known writing on public land activities, programs and legislation before 1954. 106 pp. 45¢.

Wildlife on the Public Lands. Full-color booklet discussing the influence of habitat in major public land regions—deserts, plains, forests, tundra—on native wildlife; contains 50 photos of fish and wildlife species of these regions. 36 pp. (Available only from Superintendent of Documents; 35¢.)

Surveying Our Public Lands. Introduction to Cadastral survey system of public lands. 16 pp.

Educational Material

Careers in Resource Management. Information about permanent employment opportunities with BLM; discussion of training, promotions together with method of obtaining employment. 24 pp.

Historical Highlights of Public Land Management. Chronological presentation of major events in history of public land management from 1498 through 1962. 90 pp. 35¢

Homesteads. Data on number and total acreage of homestead entries for all public land States from 1860 to 1961; reveals many little known facts about homestead movement. 28 pp. 15¢

Landmarks in Public Land Management. Text and photos trace development of system of public land management in United States. 44 pp. 40¢

Lewis and Clark—a Brief Account of their Expedition. Sketch of Lewis and Clark expedition, 1804–1806. 12 pp. 10¢

The Louisiana Purchase. Presentation including maps of Louisiana Purchase of 1803 from files of General Land Office, predecessor of BLM. 14 pp.

Leasing and Acquiring Public Lands

Information about Public Lands. General information on ways of obtaining public land. 20 pp. 10¢

About Land in Alaska. 5 pp. (Alaska State Office)

Acquiring and Leasing Public Land in Nevada. 12 pp. (Nevada State Office)

Facts You Should Know About Acquiring Public Land in Arizona. 12 pp. (Arizona State Office)

General Information about the Public Lands in Idaho. 3 pp. (Idaho State Office)

Homesteading Past and Present. General, non-technical information on homesteading. 20 pp. 15¢

Establishing a Farm in Alaska. Semi-technical information on farming in Alaska, written by an Alaska homesteader; special section for wives. 32 pp. (Washington, D.C. and Alaska State Office)

Homesteading in Alaska. Explanation of requirements for homesteading in Alaska. 17 pp. (Alaska State Office)

How to Describe and Mark Unsurveyed Lands when locating, applying or filing under any land law for unsurveyed public land in Alaska. 4 pp. (Alaska State Office)

Headquarters Site in Alaska. Bulletin tells what a headquarters site is, and requirements for obtaining one. 6 pp. (Alaska State Office)

Homesite in Alaska. 8 pp. (Alaska State Office)

Trade and Manufacturing Site in Alaska. 5 pp. (Alaska State Office)

The Mining Claims Occupancy Act. Questions and answers about the law. 12 pp. (Washington, D.C.)

Mining Claims—Questions and Answers. General information about obtaining minerals and land under the General Mining Laws. 20 pp. (Washington, D.C.)

Multiple Use on Mining Claims. Non-technical information and guidelines for miners and mineral locators on public lands. 12 pp. 10¢

Community Recreation and the Public Domain. Explanation of how local governments and other qualified organizations may lease or buy public land under Recreation and Public Purposes Act. 40 pp. 25¢

Information about Scrip. Bulletin explaining how to redeem valid, recorded scrip (historic land claims). 2 pp. (Washington, D.C.)

The Normal Sequence of Events of a Homestead Entry on Surveyed Land. 2 pp. (Alaska State Office)

The Normal Sequence of Events of a Homestead Application on Unsurveyed Land. 2 pp. (Alaska State Office)

Recreational Opportunities on Public Lands

Leaflets for individual recreation sites are published intermittently; for information on sites in a particular State, write to the BLM State Office.

ALASKA:

Alaska's Gulkana Basin. Hunting and fishing map of Alaska's Gulkana River Basin, features BLM and State campgrounds, BLM recreation reserves, hiking trails, game management areas.

ARIZONA:

The Arizona Strip. Hunting and fishing map of "the Strip," northwest corner of Arizona.

CALIFORNIA:

"Douglas City Recreation Site" Leaflet containing photos, and description of site on Trinity River in northern California, with hunting, fishing, camping, picnicking, hiking, and swimming.

COLORADO:

Hunting and Fishing Map. Map shows land ownership—federal, state, and private—together with prime hunting areas and species throughout the state.

IDAHO:

"BLM Recreation Sites in the Idaho Panhandle." A map and guide to campsite facilities at 7 northern Idaho recreation sites. "Mineral Ridge Scenic Area" Leaflet contains map and description of viewpoints along three-mile hiking trail in scenic, historic Beauty Bay area of northern Idaho.

MONTANA:

Federal Lands Administered by BLM in Montana. State hunting and fishing map shows BLM-administered land, National Forests, and Indian Reservations; contains helpful tips on hunting and fishing in Montana.

NEVADA:

A Sportman's Guide to Public Lands in Nevada. Map shows land ownership—private, federal and State, and other; lists major fishing streams and major game species in the state.

NEW MEXICO:

Hunting and Fishing Map—New Mexico. Map shows location of BLM-administered land in New Mexico and of wildlife species throughout the state.

OREGON:

"BLM Recreation Sites in Oregon" Folder containing map and chart of 53 recreation sites and facilities in western Oregon.

"Fishermen's Bend Recreation Site" Folder with text, map and photos to portray 180 acre site on North Santiam River; facilities for picknicking, camping.

Hunting and Fishing and other Outdoor Recreation in Oregon. Map shows public land areas and BLM recreation sites; contains other helpful tips on hunting and fishing in Oregon.

"Recreation Site Directory" Leaflet with map and chart showing facilities at 10 sites in BLM's Roseburg District in southwestern Oregon.

(Continued next issue.)

Bureau of Land Management State Offices

ALASKA
Bureau of Land Management
State Office
555 Cordova St.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

ARIZONA
Bureau of Land Management
State Office
Federal Bldg.
Room 3022
Phoenix, Ariz. 85025

CALIFORNIA
Bureau of Land Management
State Office
Federal Bldg.
Room 4016
650 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, Calif. 95814

COLORADO
Bureau of Land Management
State Office
667 Insurance Exchange Bldg.
910 15th St.
Denver, Colo. 80202

IDAHO
Bureau of Land Management
State Office
323 Federal Bldg.
(P.O. Box 2237)
Boise, Idaho 83701

MONTANA
Bureau of Land Management
State Office
Crum-McKinnon Bldg.
1245 North 29th St.
Billings, Mont. 59101

NEVADA
Bureau of Land Management
State Office
560 Mill St.
(P.O. Box 1551)
Reno, Nev. 89505

NEW MEXICO
Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Post Office
and Federal Bldg.
State Office
South Federal Place
Santa Fe, N. Mex. 87501

OREGON
Bureau of Land Management
State Office
710 N.E. Holladay
Portland, Oreg. 97232

UTAH
Bureau of Land Management
State Office
8217 Federal Bldg.
(P.O. Box 11505)
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

WYOMING
Bureau of Land Management State Office
Federal Recreation Bldg., 2002 Capital Ave.
Cheyenne, Wyo. 82001

Sightly Dump Sites

Lack of suitable land for centralized dump sites frequently results in scenes like this along roadsides.

By Norman W. Noble,
Resource Utilization Specialist, Denver, Colorado

What to do with an ever increasing accumulation of trash, litter, debris, and other items discarded by an affluent society has become one of the nation's major headaches.

From man's earliest beginning he has had refuse heaps; but in his primitive struggle for existence, he utilized nearly every scrap of hair, bone, stick and stone. What little he found of no value, he tossed aside or into a communal trash dump that never became large enough to be a real problem. Centuries later it even had a value as archeologists found in it clues to his culture.

Even today modern man in some parts of the world has no problem. During the long winter months along coastal areas of the far north, refuse is hauled onto the sea ice where it remains until summer thaws consign it to the ocean's bottom.

But in our land civilization has brought a steadily increasing amount of material possessions, and with them has come an even more rapidly growing mass of material to be discarded, including everything from "disposable" containers to obsolete and broken gadgets that are easier to replace than repair.

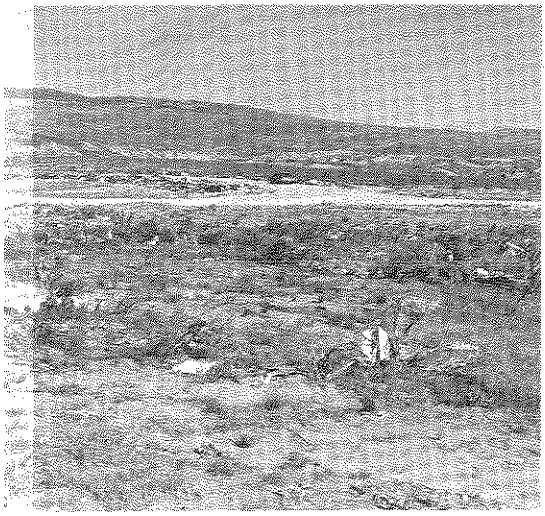
Where to Put It?

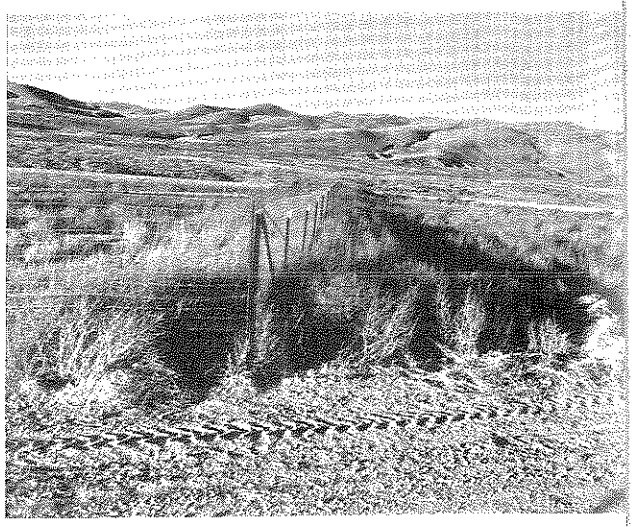
Where areas have been set aside as dumps, sites are rapidly filled to overflow, and suitable land for additional locations is difficult to find. In many other areas, particularly small communities, no provision has been made for a centralized controlled dump site. Here again lack of land often is the obstacle. As a result, individuals frequently throw trash and refuse along any convenient highway or open space, with complete disregard for property rights, eye appeal, and even

health hazards, resulting in a littered landscape which blights the entire area.

A number of Colorado towns and counties, as well as many others throughout the western states, are finding an inexpensive solution to this community problem. The answer is long term lease or purchase of public land from the Bureau of Land Management at a very nominal fee.

Under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act, states, cities, counties, and qualified non-profit organizations can obtain acreages for parks, institutions, and other public uses. Although infrequently used until recently, a portion of the act includes a provision which allows the purchase of land for dump sites at an annual lease rate of 25 cents per acre or purchase price of $2.50 per acre.





Left: This Kremmling, Colorado city dump presented a littered landscape with papers and other trash scattered by the wind before a public land site was acquired for controlled dumping.

Right: This is the same area after controlled dumping was initiated. Land-fill techniques provide earth and grass coverage.

It is under this provision that many communities throughout the west are acquiring land and developing public dump sites, some of which will be covered over in future years and used for public parks, playgrounds, and other recreational areas. Thirteen cities and counties in Colorado have acquired land through this method, and more are contemplating similar leases or purchases.

Revised in 1954

Originally the Bureau issued a special land use permit as a means of authorizing land for existing or proposed community dump sites. However, this did not assure definite tenure and when the Recreation Act of 1926 was revised as the R&PP Act in 1954 and later amended to broaden its scope, provision was made for purchase of the land. Now land may be acquired either by lease or purchase, depending upon qualifying factors.

The procedure for acquiring dump site acreages is relatively simple but requires definite legal steps by both parties. First, the city or county interested in acquiring the land selects a site and makes application through the Bureau's Land Office in that state. The Land Office then determines if the application meets qualifications.

Next, a BLM representative examines the land to determine if it can be properly used for the purpose without conflicting with other Bureau multiple use programs. If the tract is proper for lease or sale, the Bureau then issues a proposed decision to notify the applicant and grazing permittee, where appropriate, that BLM intends to classify the land for use as a dump site. A 30-day period is allowed during which interested persons may file comments or objections.

At the end of the 30-day period a final decision is issued, subject to a 60-day period during which the Secretary of the Interior can act on any further protests. At the end of this period the Land Office manager proceeds with the final papers leasing or selling the land to the community.

Twofold Results

The program has an effective twofold result. The city or county acquires much-needed land and can exercise control over trash disposal. As part of the procedure BLM requires that certain standards be maintained, such as fencing the area to prevent trash being scattered by winds, and sanitary land-fill procedures.

A dump site meeting these qualifications can become more than just a dump. After it has served its purpose as a dump, it can become an attractive land-filled area of grass, a camp ground, playground area, or other attractive community project.

PUBLIC SALE BULLETIN BOARD

This is a compilation of the most up-to-date information possible on transactions and future sales of public lands by land offices of the Bureau of Land Management. Any details on land descriptions, prices and other information pertinent to sales must be obtained from the individual land offices. When possible, all sales are scheduled far enough in advance so ample notice can be given in Our Public Lands. Because this is not always possible, interested purchasers should always check with the local land offices.

For official information . . .

. . . about public land sales, there are three sources: This section of Our Public Lands magazine, which contains information only of a general nature; and local land offices operated by the Bureau of Land Management. The only other official source is the Federal Register.

No free land is available . . .

. . . from the Federal government, contrary to claims made by various nation-wide information companies. When lands are placed on the market, they are sold for not less than appraised value and often bring more.

ALASKA

The Anchorage District and Land Office is currently conducting small tract sales each Friday between 11:00 a.m., and noon. The sales are being held in the District's Public Service Office at 555 Cordova Street in Anchorage. Tracts that are being offered are "leftovers" from sales that were first conducted several months ago. These are as follows:

1. *Public Sale Numbers 20 and 21.*

Both sales are for tracts in the Lake Louise area which is located 20 miles north of the Glenn Highway at a point about 160 miles northeasterly of Anchorage. Lake Louise is primarily a summer recreation area with boating, fishing, and hunting being the primary attractions.

Sale number 20 has 47 tracts remaining from the original 72 offered. Prices range from $280 to $1,080. Size of the lots range from 1.51 acres to 7.98 acres.

Sale number 21 has 33 tracts remaining from the original 38 offered. Prices range from $250 to $1,100. Size of the lots range from 3.50 acres to 4.99 acres.

2. *Public Sale Number 24.*

This sale involves tracts located in Naknek, Alaska, and King Salmon, Alaska. The two villages are on the north shore of Naknek River which empties into the Bering Sea via Kvichak Bay and Bristol Bay. They lie about 300 air miles southwest of Anchorage, Alaska. Commercial Airlines have regularly scheduled flights from King Salmon to Anchorage and other points in Alaska. The two villages are connected by 16 miles of gravel road.

The Naknek-King Salmon area is primarily important for commercial fishing but it is also important for sports fishing and hunting. King Salmon is the site of the King Salmon Air Force Base.

There are 39 tracts remaining from the original 48 offered. Prices range from $300 to $920. Size of the lots range from 0.56 acre to 5 acres.

Prospective buyers are cautioned, as always, to carefully inspect the tract, if possible, or to fully acquaint themselves with its characteristics by inspection of maps or other sources of information before offering to buy.

ARIZONA

From August through October, three parcels, ranging from 40 to 160 acres were sold for a total of $10,200.

The list of lands now for sale includes 43 parcels being offered each week on a continuing basis. Total acreage available in Arizona under this law at present aggregates slightly more than 8,000 acres.

Parcels vary in size from 40 to 1,000 acres. Appraised values reflect the fair market value for the area in which the lands are located. Prices start at $40 per acre.

The parcels are located in various parts of the state. The land is generally desert in character, covered only by native grasses and supporting various types of cacti prominent in the Southwest. The lands are unimproved, and the public is cautioned to thoroughly acquaint themselves with the land, access rights, availability of public utilities, etc., before submitting a bid.

ARKANSAS

The New Orleans office plans to offer 12 to 15 tracts of unimproved, hilly timberland in Arkansas for sale some time in March 1965. The tracts range from about 5 acres to 80 acres in size. They contain little or no merchantable timber and have fair to poor ac-

cess from public roads. Sale will be to the highest bidder (written or oral) subject to preference rights of contiguous landowners. Prospectus available from Manager, New Orleans Office, Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 53226, New Orleans, La., 70150.

CALIFORNIA

A weekly offering is held every Wednesday at 10 a.m. in the Riverside Land Office of more than 2,000 small tracts. Appraised prices range from $150 per tract to $10,000 per tract. Properties located in vicinity of Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree, Palm Desert, Twenty-nine Palms, Desert Center, and Trona.

The Sacramento Land Office has 40 parcels of land available for sale under the Public Sale Act on a continuing basis. With one exception, all parcels are without legal access. Topography in most instances is such that if a right of ingress could be obtained without great expense, there would be need to expend considerable money to build a road into the area.

A total of 13 small tracts are offered for sale to the public every Wednesday at 10 a.m. at the Sacramento Land office. Located in the area of Redding, Weaverville, Yreka and Newtown, the tracts vary in size from 2¼ acres to five acres. Appraised prices range from $410 to $7,625.

Twenty-one sales were held from August through October. Three additional sales were cancelled for failure of the applicant to publish. All were applications filed by applicants prior to change in the regulations. With two exceptions, all parcels in the 21 sales were sold at the appraised price. Most of the lands offered were isolated, rough and mountainous and had no legal access. In one large offering in Lassen County, during the month of October we offered 21 parcels but only sold three. Of the three, only one parcel was sold for $900 over the appraised price as a result of competitive bidding.

Lands offered for sale on Bureau motion in the northern part of the state have no legal access. These parcels are difficult to move because most persons interested report that the adjoining owners either refuse to give a right of way or sell a right of way for any reasonable amount.

IDAHO

Six tracts were sold by the Idaho Land Office during October, ranging in price from approximately 11 dollars per acre to 50 dollars. Acreage of the tracts ranged from 78 to 162. High bids were either equal to the appraised price or very little over.

Type of land? One tract was described as mostly rough and steep with lava craters and outcrops, sagebrush with a small amount of scrub timber. Three tracts adjacent to Snake River were described as potentially useful for agriculture. They contained dense stands of willows and undergrowth.

NEVADA

From August through October the Nevada State Office sold approximately 785 acres of public land in three sales under the Public Sale Act and 40 acres involving 12 tracts under the Small Tract Act at Orovada, Nev. Most auctions continue to arouse fair interest.

UTAH

Seven tracts will be offered for sale at public auction at 1 p.m. Wednesday, February 3, 1965 in Room 8218, Bureau of Land Management, Federal Building, 125 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah. Lands are generally rough in character, primarily valuable for grazing. Tracts vary in size from 40 to 640 acres. Appraisals run from $6 per acre to $45. Six tracts are located in Garfield County, one in Kane County.

More than 4,000 acres have been sold at public auction since July 1, 1964. Most of the tracts offered for sale were rough, mountainous, arid lands suitable mainly for grazing of livestock. Most were surrounded by private lands.

There has been only the one Bureau-motion sale during the period. It involved the small tract area at Orovada. This area is located within the Quinn River Valley, one of the state's more promising agricultural areas developed under the Desert Land Act.

Bureau of Land Management Land Offices

ALASKA:
Federal Bldg., Fourth & G Sts.
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
516 Second Ave.
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

ARIZONA:
Federal Bldg., Room 3204
Phoenix, Ariz. 85025

CALIFORNIA:
Federal Bldg., Room 4017
Sacramento, Calif. 95814
1414 8th St.
Riverside, Calif. 92502

COLORADO:
700 Gas & Electric Bldg.
Denver, Colo. 80202

IDAHO:
323 Federal Bldg.
Boise, Idaho 83701

MONTANA
(N. Dak., S. Dak.):
1245 North 29th St.
Billings, Mont. 59101

NEVADA:
560 Mill St.
Reno, Nev. 89505

NEW MEXICO (Okla.):
Federal Bldg.
Santa Fe, N. Mex. 87501

OREGON:
710 N.E. Holladay
Portland, Oreg. 97232

UTAH:
Third Floor, Darling Bldg.
Salt Lake City, Utah 84110

WASHINGTON:
670 Bon Marche Bldg.
Spokane, Wash. 99201

WYOMING
(Nebr., Kans.):
2002 Capitol Ave.
Cheyenne, Wyo.

ALL OTHER STATES:
LaSalle Bldg.
1728 L St. NW.
Washington, D.C. 20240

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1965 O—753–178