



Watersheds Messenger

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spring 1995

Protecting and restoring school endowment watersheds.

Increasing returns for the school children of Idaho.

The Land Board: Constitutional Tribunal or Kangaroo Court?

by Jon Marvel

On March 31 and again on April 7 the Idaho Board of Land Commissioners refused three high bids made by Idaho Watersheds Project and returned leases to ranchers who essentially declined to participate in a fair and open auction to determine who would receive leases for 1,320 acres of school endowment land in southern Idaho. In doing so the Land Board turned down \$1,430 bid by IWP.

Idaho Watersheds Project had won these auctions in November 1994 by outbidding Simplot Livestock Company, Faulkner Land and Livestock, and Swan Land and Livestock. These three ranching entities had evidently colluded to avoid participating in a fair auction. All three bid five dollars over IWP's opening bid and then folded without making another bid. It appears that they felt the need to bid at least once in order to preserve their standing to appeal to the Land Board where they were assured (as events proved) of having their leases returned to them.

In two other auctions in which ranchers actually bid against IWP, \$28,600 was raised for the school endowment fund. At the auction for the 8,000 acre Danskin lease in Elmore County, three ranchers and IWP bid for the lease. IWP dropped out of the bidding at \$8,000 and two ranchers carried the bidding to \$15,050. In the Sheridan Creek auction of March 7, 1995 for 320 acres of school land in Clark County, which includes a mile of severely degraded Sheridan Creek, before 20 witnesses, Steve Hart, the accountant for Sheridan Golden Eagle Ranch, outbid IWP by \$50 with his final bid of \$13,550. Subsequent to this auction Sheridan Golden Eagle Ranch

appealed the results of the bidding to the Land Board claiming that the ranch representative was "coerced", "legally harassed", and "forced" to bid the winning amount! He has asked that the Land Board nullify the auction and award Sheridan Golden Eagle Ranch the lease at the current annual rate with no premium bid. IWP encourages supporters to write the Land Board with some suggestions about what auctions are all about. IWP did not appeal the results of auctions which we lost.

At this writing Idaho Watersheds Project has not decided whether to file notices of appeal to District Court for the three leases returned to ranchers; our decision will be made to meet the 28 day legal filing requirement from the decision date. IWP welcomes advice from supporters about our course of action on these three leases. The appeal of the Lake Creek lease in Custer County which was returned to a rancher in February 1994 is now before the Idaho Supreme Court with a decision not expected until early fall of this year.

One unexpected benefit of the activities of IWP came as a surprise to many when the Land Board required riparian management standards be included in all three leases taken from IWP. The word from the Department of Lands is that fencing will be required on the Swan lease to create a totally separate riparian pasture. This requirement is unprecedented on school endowment land grazing leases. IWP will be monitoring the actual lease terms this summer to see if the Department of Lands is serious about real management standards for degraded streams. 🐾

Notice of Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of Idaho Watersheds Project, Inc. will be held on Friday, May 12, 1995 at noon at 16 West Croy Street, Suite N, Hailey, Idaho. All members in good standing (i.e. who have made the minimum \$7.00 contribution in the previous year) are encouraged to attend or provide a written proxy designating a member to vote in his or her place. Such proxy may be provided before or at the meeting. At the annual meeting, the Board

of IWP will be up for election. Currently the Board consists of three members: Linn Kincannon, Lynne Stone, and Jonathan Marvel, all of whom are candidates for reelection. The annual meeting will consider amending the Bylaws to enlarge the size of the Board by two members. Immediately following the annual meeting the Board will meet in regular session to elect officers for the following year, and to conduct any business brought before it. 🐾

The Idaho State Land Board at Work 1994-95

by Dr. Don Johnson, Fisheries Scientist, Representative of Idaho Watersheds Project

Can anyone be positive of what the work of the State Land Board (SLB) is? Having watched and heard them in action on March 31st it was not clear to me whether their job is contracting (shrinking) or expanding.

Idaho Watersheds Project (IWP) has proceeded toward its goals with the understanding that the SLB has the responsibility to see that State Endowment Lands are 1) leased to the high bidder at open auctions as prescribed by the Idaho Constitution and 2) that the leasee follows best management practices to prevent degradation or depletion of that land's resources while providing maximum long-term yield for the benefit of Idaho's school children.

Obviously the SLB does not acknowledge any responsibility to award leases to the high bid, "winner" of the required auctions. The March 31st meeting was called to consider the appeals of Simplot Livestock Co. and Swan Land & Livestock that the leases be awarded to the low bidders. Previous to the meeting memoranda were filed and testimony scheduled which could

provide a basis for a SLB decision on the appeals. Those representing the IWP were not overconfident regarding the award of the leases to the high bidder, the SLB had earlier (December 1994) shaken any belief in the existence of a rational process when a non-bidder had been awarded a lease after appealing an IWP auction "victory".

The appeals heard on March 31st claimed 1) that IWP was not a "qualified" or "legitimate" bidder, 2) that IWP was not "in good faith" and was "manipulating" the auction process with "inappropriate attempts to unilaterally determine the land use of state grazing land"; 3) that exclusion of livestock from these lands would at least increase the danger of fire and "effectively sterilize" the lands' economic value which would in turn damage the local and state economics; and 4) that the effect of selective leasing of damaged stream habitat (riparian areas) would eliminate the economic value of nearby dry grazing lands by interfering with livestock's access to water.

The Simplot appeal was scheduled to end by noon. It concluded at 4:30 p.m. when, within seconds of

Jon Marvel's concluding remarks, J.D. Williams entered a motion to award the lease to Simplot. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously without benefit of any reasoned discussion or comparison of conflicting testimony. Limited earlier questioning of witnesses by SLB members could be categorized as political posturing or "slow pitches" with responses lofted beyond the "outfield" in support of what seemed "a done deal". There was no SLB comment as to the IWP qualifications as a bidder. As to the organization's good faith a suggestion was made that IWP funds, not accepted for the leases, could be provided for the livestock companies to use for range improvement. Testimony dealt with the increased susceptibility of range to fire following

disruption of native plant communities by overgrazing (takeover by annuals such as cheatgrass), but the SLB drew no conclusions regarding the impact of livestock exclusion on relative fire danger.

Economic testimony was presented by both sides, although neither presented any dollar amounts for functioning meadows (water storage), stable stream banks

(absence of soil loss and sedimentation), clean water, wildlife and fish habitat, or esthetic or recreational values. In the absence of that information the SLB concluded that the presence of livestock was worth at least \$14,000 and that rehabilitation of degraded lands by excluding livestock could not be assigned any long-term economic benefit.

While looking at photos of sloughing stream banks and degraded or eliminated meadows, livestock company representatives and SLB members referred to disastrous floods and to an American Fisheries society award to BLM for habitat improvement in the watershed. The SLB did not acknowledge that BLM obtained its rehabilitation by excluding livestock nor that flooding had not damaged the rehabilitated stream section.

The SLB did conclude that exclusion of livestock from the leased section would be disruptive to use of other areas by keeping cattle from the water although all testimony, including that of the Simplot land manager who pointed out on a map "water gaps" both immediately



Dr. Steve Novak provides scale reference for cut banks at Simplot lease on East Fork of Bruneau River, 1995.

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Kindred Spirits in Idaho Department of Fish and Game

by Gene E. Bray, Habitat Improvement Volunteer and Retired Business Executive

While their methods and unique position in the State government force an arms-length relationship with IWP, the underlying philosophy of Fish and Game (F&G) is in considerable consonance with that of IWP. They are working hard to rescue and rehabilitate sensitive and suitable lands for the benefit of wild game and fish. Whenever possible they incorporate private lands (either fee simple or easements), state endowment lands (for which they pay grazing fees), BLM and Forest Service allotments into wildlife management areas, one outstanding example of which is the Brownlee Wildlife Management Area (WMA).

Brownlee is about 19 miles northwest of Cambridge on Idaho 71 and encompasses about 48,000 acres, 10,000 of which are owned, and 12,000 of which are Idaho endowment land leases, which expire in year 2000. The former owner, Mike Hillman, was an environmentally conscious rancher who started monitoring and rehabilitation activities during the '80's. Having been relieved of grazing load for the last four or five years, the riparian areas show improvement as the annual spring plantings take hold and become established. Unfortunately, the survival rate of such plantings is only about one-third due to much of this area being winter range for about 1,000 elk and 1,000 deer with associated depredation.

During the April 1-2 planting I encountered a heavy density of fresh deer and elk signs along the streams but they were uniformly distributed and the browse nearby was in excellent condition. By comparison in a planting last year in the Owyhees, the congregating of cattle in the riparian zone had obliterated most of the vegetation and here was considerable invasion of non-native types. So it appears to me that with roughly the same foraging load,

the congregating nature of domestic cattle is far more damaging to riparian zones than the "sip and seek cover" habits of the large game animals.

While it is controversial, the F&G is this year for the first time going to limited, closely controlled cattle grazing at about 50 per cent of the available Animal Unit Months (AUM). (They buy the AUM's at \$5.15 and sell them at \$9.26!) This is an attempt to stimulate late season growth for improved winter forage for game and to do it in a manner that allows only trailing through riparian areas.

It appears that the southwest region of F&G is close to consummating a deal that gives them an easement over a second 3,000 acres that will be key in creating another WMA. It would be nice if that were tied to a revocation clause that insures the continued (apolitical) independence of the Fish and Game Commission, as it was created in 1938. For IWP supporters interested in gifts of land or easements to Idaho F&G with ancillary tax benefits, there are some precedents and Tom Parker at the Boise Headquarters (208) 334-2920 is the best contact.

While it must be done with care, IWP supporters might also consider some subtle urging that the Department of Lands avail themselves of the F&G considerable expertise that exists in the areas of habitat, botany, biology, ecological systems, wild life management, etc. Even if this is only to review or provide inputs to the riparian protection sections of the grazing management plans the Department of Lands is hopefully going to generate, it might help. (I realize this is like expecting the Commandant of Auschwitz to seek the assistance of Mother Theresa in defining the care practices for inmates.)

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upstream and downstream of the section in question, demonstrated this was a non-issue.

Members of the SLB made themselves clear on the first "responsibility" referred to above; i.e. they feel they **can** award leases to whomever they please. Although they **will** hold "auctions", as called for in the Idaho Constitution, attendance is more important than bids. Having settled the **auction** question and reduced their work in that area, by restricting the award of leases to livestock (or other favored) interests currently holding them, they discussed their stewardship role.

The SLB has expressed its view that Endowment Lands should be under management plans and be monitored; Governor **Batt** was under the impression this was required by state law. They also feel that degraded riparian areas should be rehabilitated, but they have not **acknowledged** that the best, and probably only, way to

arrest or reverse present degradation of stream banks is to exclude livestock. Another problem, which may interfere with expanded involvement with their second responsibility of resource stewardship, is that the State Land Department does not have the staff to prepare management plans, nor to monitor them. It was pointed out to them in testimony that the cost of an adequate staff would greatly exceed existing grazing revenues.

Is the work of the SLB to manage State Endowment Lands according to free-market economics with proceeds paying for administrative costs and contributing to school funds; or will they continue with their established work of dispensing corporate welfare to the "dole" segment of the livestock industry? We must keep in mind that what the Constitution specifies, and what the SLB says, usually does not reflect reality nor the way the system works, but we should continue to try to push toward long-term beneficial goals.

The Cost of Beef

by Dick Dorworth (reprinted with permission from the Idaho Mountain Express)

There are approximately 1.28 billion cattle on earth, occupying about a quarter of the planet's total landmass. Their combined weight exceeds that of the entire human population.

A feedlot with 10,000 head of cattle produces as much waste as a city of 110,000 people. This means that cattle produce 11 times as much waste as humans, or, calculated another way, the cattle on earth produce as much waste as more than 14 billion humans.

Organic waste from livestock, pesticides and fertilizers used to grow livestock feed, and the salts and sediments 'generated in the process are the number one non-point source of water pollution in the U.S. Cattle produce a billion tons of organic waste each year.

That's a lot of waste.

Waste, of course, starts out as something else. In the case of most of the world's cattle, it starts out as grain. Seventy percent of the grain grown in the U.S., and one-third of the grain grown in the world, is fed to cattle and other livestock.

Enough grain is turned into waste by livestock to give every man, woman and child on earth a cup of grain each day. This happens while a billion human beings at this moment **are** suffering from chronic hunger and malnutrition. This happens while each year 40 to 60 million people, mostly children, die from hunger and related diseases.

Turning grain into beef is a grossly inefficient method of delivering protein to an exploding human population. An argument could be made that it is a criminally irresponsible use of dwindling resources in a shrinking world.

The 1.28 billion cattle on earth are not here because they **are**, like man, a dominant species, masters of survival. Left to their own bovine ways, cattle populations on earth would drop quickly and drastically. What remained after a few years would undoubtedly be a leaner, meaner, less docile, more interesting creature than the fecal smeared, dust covered, heavy-footed, benumbed beast befouling streams and beating down pastures throughout western America as if the land were **t h e i r s a l o n e .**

Cattle proliferate because they are an industry, and the production of beef is an industrial process. **As** such, cattle are treated as, and in fact are, a commodity, not living creatures, to that industry.

Each day around 100,000 cattle are slaughtered in the U.S. It is ironic with this much meat being butchered that the cattle industry is a major cause of **world** hunger. It is also a major contributor of pollution,

environmental degradation, deforestation, desettification and species extinction.

A beef cow loose on the range consumes 900 pounds of vegetation a month. Because of this as much as 85 percent of American rangeland is degraded by overgrazing. America has lost a third of its topsoil, and 85 percent of that loss is attributable to livestock production.

Almost half the water used in the U.S. goes to grow feed and provide drinking water for cattle and other livestock. In the desert west, water tables are dropping everywhere. The Ogallala aquifer, one of the largest fresh water reserves in the world, is half gone in three states. In California, where 42 percent of irrigation water goes to meat production, water tables have dropped so low that the earth is sinking in places under the vacuum.

Cattle are a major contributor to global warming in several ways, one of them is the tens of millions of tons of methane gas released into the atmosphere each year through their digestive systems. In other words, cow farts are neither weightless, odorless or innocuous.

Millions of predators -wolves, coyotes, bears, mountain lions — and birds, including eagles, are exterminated by the U.S. government each year as a "public service" to livestock interests. This represents tax dollars spent to destroy the common biological heritage of North America for the economic gain of a few private businessmen.

The rain forests of South and Central America have been decimated in less than 40 years in order to create cattle pasture. Today less than one-third of Central American's rain forests remain. Throughout Latin America, cattle grazing has created a permanent ecological and social catastrophe — loss of soil nutrients, soil compaction, destruction of biological diversity, the beginning of desertification, the displacement of millions of subsistence farmers, the extermination of entire nations of indigenous rain forest peoples, the extinction of entire ecosystems — that is a distant abstraction to the hamburgerjunkie, the filet mignon gourmand and the rest of the market for cheap beef in the U.S.

Christopher Uhl, a biologist at Pennsylvania State University, and Geoffrey Parker of the Institute of Ecosystem Studies at New York Botanical Garden, have estimated that every four-ounce hamburger produced **from** the rain forests costs about **half** a ton of forest, or measured another way, about 55 square feet of forest.

They **write**, "What life might inhabit the 55 square feet of tropical forest represented by a single hamburger?"

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Such a space could contain one vigorous tree, 60 feet tall and weighing about 875 pounds. Below the tree might be some 50 saplings and seedlings in some 20-30 different species (another 120 pounds). Several of these plant species might be extremely rare with limited distributions. Living in the vegetation would be thousands of insects in more than a hundred species (as much as 2 pounds). Several of these insects would likely belong to species not yet known to science. Dozens of bird, reptile, and mammal species would regularly pass through and use this patch of forest (2 pounds). Finally, an almost unimaginable diversity and abundance of mosses, fungi and microorganisms would be associated with leaf surfaces, bark, roots, and the soil (1 pound). All told, millions of individuals and thousands of species inhabit that patch of tropical forest represented by a single hamburger."

The late author, activist, prophet and pundit, Ed Abbey, suggested that a great many environmental problems of western America would be solved by outlawing the hunting of deer, elk, bear, antelope and other

noble beings inhabiting the land. Instead, he proposed an open hunting season on cattle.

Needless to say, members of that politically powerful but minority group, the cattle industry, took offense at Abbey's sensible words. This gang of businessmen, an ever shrinking remnant of the days of open range between Texas and Montana 150 years ago, is famously thin-skinned when it comes to the idea that the cattle industry is a liability to the environment and to the health of mankind itself.

But it is.

The U.S. Surgeon General has determined that 70 percent of American deaths are related to diet, particularly the overconsumption of beef and other foods high in cholesterol and saturated fat. Many studies have linked red meat consumption to the development of heart disease, strokes, and colon and breast cancer.

To give up 55 square feet of tropical forest and all the life it sustains for a four ounce hamburger is crazy. It not only leads to heart disease, it is a heart disease.



"Overgrazing is much too weak a term. Most of the public lands in the West, and especially in the Southwest, are what **you** might call "cowburnt." Almost anywhere and everywhere you go in the American West you find hordes of these ugly, clumsy, stupid, bawling, stinking, fly-covered, shit-smearing, disease-spreading brutes. They are a pest and a plague. They pollute our streams and rivers. They infest our canyons, valleys, meadows and forests." Edward Abbey, 1906

A Special Thank You to . . .

... the following people who wrote letters to the Land Board supporting the award of leases to IWP:

<i>Stephen Schneider</i>	<i>Robert F. Warren</i>	<i>Scott Crocker</i>	<i>Anita Barnes</i>	<i>Neil Gudjunb</i>
<i>Larry Barnes</i>	<i>Patti Lousen</i>	<i>Dennis Baird</i>	<i>Erwin D. Sias</i>	<i>Jeff Barney</i>
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<i>James Hoffman</i>	<i>Reginald R. Reeves</i>	<i>Kenneth K. Kellogg</i>	<i>Roger Crist</i>	<i>Bee Longley</i>
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<i>Melissa & Peter deLisser</i>	<i>Ken & Hoffman-Kinghorn</i>			

... and to the following experts who, without doubt, provided the clearest and most comprehensive testimony ever heard within the confines of the Hall of Mirrors at the March 31st and April 7th hearings:

Mr. Al Logosz, range management specialist

Dr. Richard Slaughter, economist

Mr. Osborne Casey, riparian management specialist

Mr. Fred Christensen, wildlife specialist

Ms. Debra Kronenberg, attorney

Mr. Wait Minnick, corporate leader

Ms. Janet OCrowley, citizen activist

... and to the following members who testified for IWP before Legislative Committees this winter: Gene E. Bray, Fritz Dixon and Gerald Schroder.

... and also David Stelling for his expert financial and tax law advice, to two anonymous supporters who have expended enormous energy in all aspects of IWP's work, and Marilyn, Nancy, Nan, and Melissa of C-M Copy & Print in Hailey for their invaluable help in putting this newsletter together.

Dr. Don Johnson, biologist and fisheries specialist

Dr. Steve Novak botanist



Watersheds Messenger

Editor: Jon Marvel

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Officers of Idaho Watersheds Project:

Jon Marvel - President • Linn Kincannon - Vice President • Lynne Stone - Secretary

Mission Statement

Idaho Watersheds Project, Inc. was founded in September 1993 to acquire, protect, and restore Idaho public school endowment lands which have been degraded by livestock abuse, to improve returns to the school endowment fund, and to raise public consciousness regarding the importance of our shared public lands and waters as well as the animals and plants which depend on them.

Downhill For 120 Years - But "It's Better Now Than It's Ever Been"

by Janet OCrowley, Picabo, Idaho

How have livestock affected the face of southern Idaho since the 1840's? One can look at conditions today and compare with old photos and diaries. Dana Yensen did an excellent survey of those sources for BLM, producing both a memorable slide show and a crisp research paper: "Grazing History of Southwest Idaho with Emphasis on the Birds of Prey Study Area" in 1980. Those fortunate enough to experience her slide show gain an indelible insight into the effects of unlimited dry season grazing by draft and herd animals on the Snake River plain.

John Ryan, a native of Camas Prairie compiled the excellent **History of Camas Prairie**, mainly from contemporary newspapers, diaries, and letters. Published in 1975 by Camas County and the Idaho State Historical Societies, this wonderful account was intended for the full scholarly treatment, but intimations of his own mortality compelled Mr. Ryan to

publish just as it came from his typewriter. He adds very little comment but strings together a clear picture of life and times just as the Idaho Statesman, Wood River Times and the Idaho World reported them.

Sample: "A party of 95 prospectors met on Camas Prairie with 185 horses, supplied themselves with fish and fowl.. ." to go to the Montana silver strike. The reporter added that hopeful miners were making Camas Prairie a thoroughfare. A similar throng crossed the prairie en route to the Wood River gold mines in the 1880's. Ryan cites a diary of the 1860's telling of 10,000 cattle in one crossing of Camas Prairie en route to eastern markets. He shows that the river of cows continued through the 1880's until rail service reached western Idaho. In 1880 32,000 cattle were counted, while at the peak of the west-to-east cattle driving it was estimated that 240,000 cattle crossed Camas Prairie in one season. As cattle diminished, increasing numbers of sheep began to take their place. Ten thousand sheep at a time were driven through.

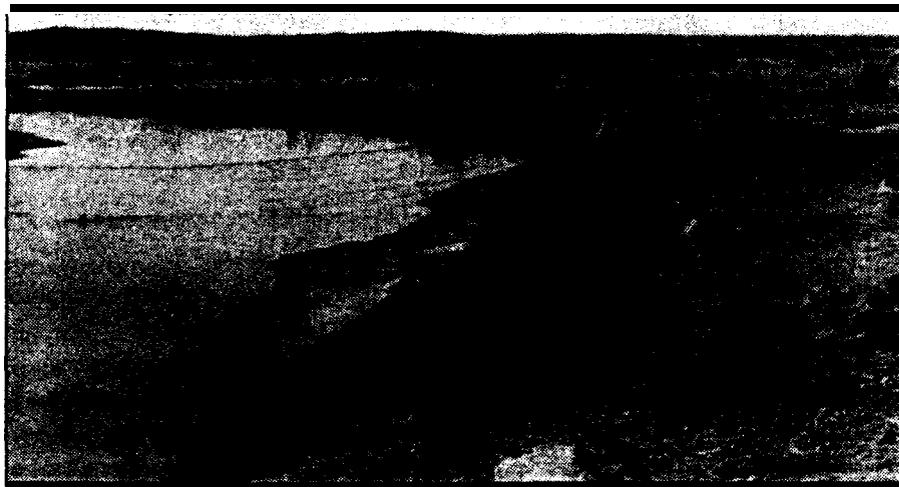
The TriWeekly (of Boise) stated "the magnitude of the cattle trade of eastern Oregon, Idaho and Washington is but dimly understood . . . an evil of first magnitude to fanners and stock growers" on the Prairie whose open unfenced stock was often sucked along by

the river of kine.

So what did south central Idaho look like before? What is the potential condition of these uplands and plains, gullies and draws? What could they look like if Nature were given a chance? To answer that with a living example we must look around for some nooks of unfarmed ungrazed land for a baseline comparison with the public lands and watersheds as we see them today.

EPA's excellent color brochure: **Livestock Grazing on Western Riparian Areas, 1990**, authored by the incontrovertible rangeland authorities Ed Chaney,

Wayne Elmore, and William S. Platts offer photos of back-from-the-dead streams rested for 10 years, or only one. The contrasts jump right off the page. But to experience a longer rejuvenation one has to search diligently. The



Typical cow damage on Little Wood River, Blaine County, south of Carey.

Nature Conservancy's Silver Creek Preserve in Blaine County is enlightening. If you look downstream from the trees and brush covered Preserve, across the boundary Silver Creek becomes a naked channel again. Or upstream, most of the converging streamlets are mere channels through the ranchland until reaching the boundary where health of stream and vegetation are the object. One can drive south from Gannett and observe the Gibson Ranch to the west where grazing ceased in 1992 to compare and contrast, then continue to Punkin Center road across Highway 20 to the Stocker Creek bridge to see what 19 years of rest can do for a natural stream.

Another, even rarer example lies on the Craters of the Moon National Monument north of Highway 93. Little Cottonwood canyon was enclosed as a water source when the Monument was established. It has been livestock free for 70 years. Wildlife usage and limited human travel have been the only fauna intrusions on this little paradise. Tall conifers, flowing water, the fresh earth smell of thick duff on the ground make this a unique treasure amongst the important habitats of southern Idaho.



Where Do We Go From Here?

by Jon Marvel

Idaho Watersheds Project is determined to continue to seek change in the management of school endowment lands leased for livestock use. The nature of that continuation is under constant discussion and change. For example, IWP has already filed applications in January 1995 for 3 sections (1,920 acres) of school land located in the San Felipe allotment 20 miles south of Challis, Idaho. This allotment is permitted to a partnership of William Hewlett and David Packard. The three sections in question have severely damaged riparian areas two of which are included in designated critical habitat for Chinook salmon. Because of the passage of SB 1194 these three leases on the San Felipe will serve as a test case for the new law. The law states that applicants for grazing leases must be "qualified" to meet a management plan. On the San Felipe allotment the ranch has never met the conditions of the management plan! One might presume that the San Felipe Ranch is not qualified to reapply for

these expiring leases, but then logic does not seem to be a large part of Land Board decisions.

Others have suggested that IWP acquire a cow (sheep, goat, emu, guinea pig, or the "livestock" of your choice) and agree to "graze" a lease. Perhaps a new category of lease called a habitat conservation lease could be approved that would pay twice as much per year as current grazing fees of about 50 cents per acre per year. These and other ideas will be pursued. IWP also encourages individuals to acquire their own lease. IWP has the expiring lease list for 1995 by county available upon request.

IWP's Jon Marvel has also applied personally for a vacant sheep allotment (the East Pass Creek allotment) on the Yankee Fork District of the Challis National Forest to test the federal land managers observance of law.

Readers should send in their own ideas to IWP, the best will be published in our next newsletter. 

News Briefs

Chronological Clipping File Available

IWP has a selection of chronological newspaper clippings from December 1993 to the present covering IWP's activities. Copies are available at a cost of \$12 (includes shipping). Mail or call in your request to Hailey.

IWP Charges Pete Cenarrusa with Conflict of Interest

IWP determined this winter that Idaho's Secretary of State for the last 28 years, Pete Cenarrusa, 's sheep have been grazing on school endowment land leases for free. Two BLM allotments on which Pete is a permittee (Laidlaw Park and Wildhorse) have school lands within the allotment that are not leased, are not fenced, and have no exchange of use with the BLM. On a third BLM allotment which he shares with his brother Luis (the Iron Mine Allotment) there is a 1,050 acre school lease which is leased to Louis A. Schindler of Blythe, California who has no livestock. According to Pete, Schindler Brothers (who are apparently friends of Pete's) hold this lease for "elk hunting" even though anyone properly licensed can hunt on the lands. Again Pete's sheep forage on the lease which is not fenced and pay nothing for the forage. While Idaho's Ethics in Government Act is remarkably weak and may not apply in this case, it would seem that someone who receives free forage from school land for his livestock should not be deciding who can hold these leases and what they should pay for them.

Governor Batt and Idaho Legislature Approve SB1194

Idaho's new Republican Governor signed into law, as an "emergency" act, SB 1194 which alters the requirements for what constitutes a qualified applicant for an expiring grazing lease. The new law also permits ranchers who apply for management plans to avoid conflict auction. Nothing in the law mandates management plans something which has been misrepresented by the public lands ranching flacks in the press. Supporters who care to receive a copy of this bill should contact IWP. IWP will test the bill this year with the San Felipe lease applications as well as other applications.

Committee for Idaho's High Desert Loses Appeal of Auction

In a truly bizarre conjunction, on the same day the Land Board overruled IWP's auction win of the Chimney Creek (Faulkner) lease, the Committee for Idaho's High Desert (CIHD) lost an appeal of an auction for over 1,000 acres of school land in Owyhee County. CIHD lost the auction to the Dickshooter Cattle Company (a Subsidiary of Simplot Livestock) by \$50.00. During the Land Board "proceedings" Attorney-General Al Lance asked CIHD representative Christel Nordhausen why she didn't bid more! Tom Basabe, President of Simplot Livestock, argued successfully that Dickshooter should be awarded the lease because "we won the auction"!

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Other States' Efforts Look Up and Down

In Oregon efforts by Rest the West and Oregon Natural Desert Association to acquire thousands of acres of state school leases in eastern Oregon have been placed on hold while appeals are heard on judicial proceedings in Hamey County. Also Governor Kitzhauber has suggested that he will vote to reverse an Oregon Land Board ruling of last summer which permits conservation interests to bid for expiring leases on Oregon school lands. Better luck next time to Bob Phillips and Bill Marlett.

In New Mexico better news comes of successful lease acquisitions by Forest Guardians, Santa Fe, of vacant grazing leases on school lands in northern New Mexico. **Congratulations** to Sam Hitt and John Homing and to their supporters!

Land & Water Fund Grazing Meetings

The Land and Water Fund is holding two important meetings the week of May 9-12 in Boise and Ketchum to bring together citizens interested in public lands ranching and attorneys for the Fund who are anxious to assist in bringing change to public land management. The meetings will focus on the 4,500 expiring Forest Service term grazing permits and what can be done to influence the terms of their renewal. IWP strongly encourages all readers to attend one of these meetings. They will be held Wednesday, May 10th at 5:30 p.m. at the Wilderness Society office at 413 West Idaho Street in

Boise, and Thursday, May 11th at Chapter One Bookstore in Ketchum at 160 North Main from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Busterback Ranch Environmental Assessment Available

The Sawtooth National Recreation Area is proposing to return livestock grazing to the 2,000 acres of Busterback Ranch in the Sawtooth Valley acquired with public funds 4 years ago. Idaho Watersheds Project encourages all supporters to write to Area Ranger Paul Ries, SNRA, Star Route, Ketchum, Idaho 83340 and request the selection of the no-grazing with mitigation alternative. To **return** the destroyers of the environment to these public lands in the beautiful Sawtooth Valley is not cost-effective and should be stopped. Request the draft EA for additional details.

Desert Redband Trout Petition Filed

Idaho Watersheds Project, Idaho Conservation League, Oregon Natural Desert Association, Oregon Natural Resource Council, Committee for Idaho's High Desert, Idaho Sporting Congress, Elko County Conservation Association, Nevada Wildlife Federation, and Dr. Don Johnson filed a formal petition with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in early April to list the desert redband trout (*Onchorhynchus mykiss* ssp.) as endangered. Perhaps it will be the first petition stopped cold by the "Contract on America!"

Join Us

YES, I'd like to protect and restore Idaho's School Endowment Lands.

I'd like to join Idaho Watersheds Project. Enclosed is my tax deductible annual membership:

Living Lightly: \$7.00 Individual: \$15.00 Family: \$25.00 Lifetime: \$500.00 Other \$ _____

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Mail to: Idaho Watersheds Project, Box 1602, Hailey, ID 83333

IWP's ability to pursue its legal rights in court is dependent on your financial support.

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