

### It's a Slim Chance

What does all this mean in terms of any individual getting a "farm" through the means of these laws? (The word *farm* is put in quotes because it is questionable how much land actually goes into agriculture this way. An objective of Phase II of the study is to find out what actually happens to lands after the patent is issued.)

Every citizen of the United States is born with the right to apply for a homestead or desert entry. This right *can* be used, under the law, when the individual reaches 21 or becomes the head of a family or a veteran. The right is lost once it is used, and by certain other means.

Aliens can gain the right to homestead by taking the necessary steps for citizenship.

All in all, millions of our citizens today have the right to apply for Federal lands under the agricultural laws.

A total of 1,180 patents have been issued so far on the basis of applications filed in the 11 States during the study period, or an average of 120 annually. During the same period, about 150 patents were issued each year for lands in Alaska. Thus the chances of any individual's getting a farm by this means is a mathematical problem dealing in astronomical figures.

### The Cost of Homesteading

How about the costs of handling all this business—much of which seems doomed to failure from the start? That's a facet of the study that is waiting more detailed

analysis when all the facts are in. But because the Pittman Act has apparently reached its final stages, a rough estimate based on the applications made during the study period has been made for patenting lands under this act.

The estimates of the Pittman Act costs, hobbled with restraints to underestimate rather than to overestimate, concluded that only a very small acreage will be patented under the Act and that it will cost Uncle Sam well over \$100 per acre for each acre patented. The total costs, including the expenditures by States and local governments and the applicants themselves (both successful and unsuccessful) will amount to more than \$200 per acre patented.

### Horse and Buggy Laws

Yes, it is still possible to homestead. And interest remains high, as shown by the letters received daily by the Bureau of Land Management. Americans are a confident people, having great pride in their abilities to overcome great odds. But the "public domain" is no longer a great reservoir of agricultural lands and the horse-and-buggy laws which encourage people to attempt to homestead in the face of the odds we have seen fall short of today's needs.

As this issue went to press, the House of Representatives had approved a bill which, if enacted, would repeal the Pittman Act. The Department of the Interior has also recommended specific legislation to place the agricultural land laws in better perspective considering the present character of the "public domain."

This homestead patent, signed at Santa Fe in 1876, is one of the thousands of similar documents that gave title to land under provisions of "An act to secure homesteads to actual settlers on the public domain."

| HOMESTEAD.   |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Land Office at <i>Santa Fe N.M.</i><br><i>March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1876</i>  | APPLICATION.<br>No. <i>28</i> |
| CERTIFICATE.<br>No. <i>24</i>  |                               |
| It is hereby certified, That pursuant to the provisions of the act of Congress, approved May 20, 1862, entitled "An act to secure homesteads to actual settlers on the public domain," |                               |
| <i>Antonio Arto, of San Miguel County</i> has made payment in full for <i>four</i> <sup>acres</sup> <del>quarters</del> of   |                               |
| Section <i>21</i> in Township <i>7 North</i> of Range <i>22 East</i> containing <i>four</i> <sup>acres</sup> <del>quarters</del> <i>of</i> <sup>acres</sup>                            |                               |
| And, therefore, be it known, That on presentation of this Certificate to the COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE, the said   |                               |
| <i>Joseph Olson</i> shall be entitled to a Patent for the Tract of Land above described.   |                               |
| <i>Joseph Olson</i><br>Register  |                               |

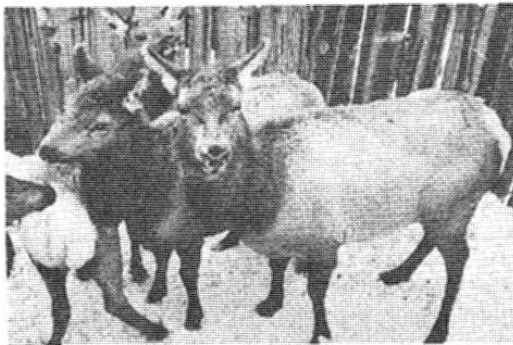


## *WILDLIFE on the Move*

**H**UNTERS on the national land reserve in future years will find some new and more vigorous herds in several areas, as the result of big-game transplants during the winter of 1961-62. One move, part of the Department's long-range program to balance an elk herd with its range, involved some of the controversial Yellowstone Park elk.

The Yellowstone elk were part of a herd that threatened to ruin the park's northern range and drive other species from the park. At one time the herd reached 10,000—about twice what game managers considered elk aplenty for the range. The hungry elk were competing for food with moose, mountain sheep, deer and antelope.

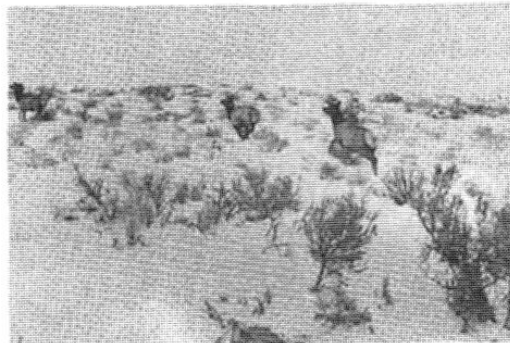
These are some of the Yellowstone elk herd that was transplanted to the Steamboat Mountain area.



Transplanting was only part of the solution to the elk problem, which became critical this past winter when severe weather followed several years of abnormally mild winters. Remaining inside the National Park in milder weather, the overpopulation threatened to cause permanent damage to the range. The elk have already crowded out beaver and whitetail deer.

The Department's wildlife biologists attacked the problem from two angles—transplanting and direct reduction. The direct reduction program was conducted by park rangers; the transplanting involved trapping the big animals and moving them to distant and more productive ranges.

Away they scamper! Biologists found plenty of food for the released Yellowstone elk under the snow.



Some 45 of the transplanted elk were released in the Steamboat Mountains area of the Rock Springs District in Wyoming. Details on the size and location of the elk release were worked out jointly by local Wyoming Game and Fish Commission personnel, BLM district field men, and the cooperating private landowners in the area.

The transplanting of Yellowstone elk into the Steamboat Mountain area was not a new introduction—a small herd of elk already roamed the public ranges. During recent years, however, the local herd had shown signs of stagnating, according to game biologists. They hope the new introduction will add “new blood” and vigor to the local herd.

Biologists feel that the increased production which should result from the transplant will mean a greater hunter harvest in future years.

The local herd has provided limited hunting in past years. This fall, under close supervision of the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission, hunting will continue in the Steamboat Mountain area—with the addition of the new elk from Yellowstone.

Down the map in southwestern Colorado, another transplanting took place in March. This project involved moving 22 skittish and swift-footed pronghorn antelope from the Black Forest, near Colorado Springs, to the Disappointment-Gypsum Gap area in San Miguel County.

And as in Wyoming, the antelope transfer was a cooperative effort between BLM and the Colorado Game and Fish Department.

The animals were trapped by the wildlife experts, who corralled the pronghorns and trucked them to the Big Gypsum Valley in San Miguel County.

Believed to be the first herd of pronghorns in southwestern Colorado, the prized game animals were released on BLM range.

Pronghorn antelope are back in the unsettled lands of the Arizona Strip now, after an absence of almost 60 years. Last November, BLM and the Arizona Game and Fish Department released 31 pronghorns in the Arizona Strip.

Bordered on the east by Kanab Creek, on the south by the gorge of the Grand Canyon, on the west by Nevada and on the north by Utah, the Strip is almost an island separated from the rest of Arizona.

This operation was the result of several years of effort on the part of the Bureau, and followed studies and agreements with other local users of the range. The animals were released, appropriately, in Antelope Valley—near where the current world record pronghorn was taken before the turn of the century.

During the early days of Arizona the Strip was the



One of the stateliest of American big game animals, the elk boasts a huge rack during summer and fall months.

home of thriving herds of the pronghorn, but hunters from neighboring areas and changing land uses dwindled the herds to extinction. But now, with the range and hunting more adequately managed, biologists are hopeful that the day of the antelope in the Arizona Strip has returned.

Transplanting big game animals is a tricky job, wildlife biologists attest, both from the standpoint of handling the sharp-hooved animals and from the view of the welfare of the animals and the range.

But in all three of the transplants, however, the State's game and fish personnel played a major role in the work, and provided the technical know-how to assure a successful introduction. BLM range managers, whose task it is to conserve and develop the national land reserve, cooperated fully in welcoming the new inhabitants.

Winding up the wildlife introductions for the year, a flock of 800 game birds from India were released in May near Deming, New Mexico. The birds are a type of desert partridge known as Francolins, and are somewhat larger than a quail. The 800 birds released in New Mexico were wild-trapped in the semi-arid province of Rajasthan in north central India and flown to the United States. Both the grey and black varieties were released on lands managed by BLM in the Waterloo area south of Deming in cooperation with the Department of Game and Fish, which supplied the birds and technical advice.



The value of petroleum products produced during 1961 from Federal and Indian lands under oil and gas leases supervised by the Department's Geological Survey was more than \$1,005 million and the royalty value was in excess of \$143 million, reflecting more than a 12 percent increase over the previous year.

As of December 31, 1961, there were 152,220 oil and gas leases under supervision, embracing some 112,172,000 acres of public, Outer Continental Shelf, acquired, Indian, and certain military and naval petroleum reserve lands. There are about 30,000 producible wells on the leased lands, and production of crude oil totaled about 291,900,000 barrels during 1961.

#### Hare Today, Gone Tomorrow

Unlike the loser in Aesop's tale of the tortoise and the hare, at least two of the 2,500 snowshoe hare released recently by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Game wasted no time at all in making tracks for somewhere else.

Each was marked with a numbered red metal ear-tag for identification.

Two tags have come home to roost so far—revealing a great deal about the hares' travels in the interim.

Number 2257 turned up the same night he was released, drowned in a raceway at the Federal hatchery at Nashua, New Hampshire—12 miles from where he was released a few hours earlier.

Number 2825 was released on February 7, and was found dead a month later, some 24 air-line miles from where he was released. After crossing several major highways, he was finally the victim of a passing car.

#### New Program Boosts Community Health Projects

Local governments and non-profit groups are the latest to benefit from the Department's expanding program under the Recreation

and Public Purposes Act, with public health projects now eligible for lands from the national land reserve at the token fee of \$2.50 per acre.

The new program, announced in April, makes areas up to 640 acres available for hospitals, treatment centers, research facilities, and water and sewage treatment plants.

Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall commented that this new program is "another step in the Interior Department's policy to encourage the transfer of suitable public land to public use under State or local control."

Colorado's first local recreation development under the new BLM policy came in Hinsdale County, where local officials are shown accepting patent for 20 acres on Lake Cristobal at \$2.50 an acre.



### "Water Famine" Film Available

The dramatic and comprehensive CBS Television Report, "Water Famine," is now available on film for use of school and adult groups. Following an enthusiastic response when it was televised on October 19, the Bell System has made prints available for wider and continuing use.

The 55-minute film, without commercials, can be secured for showing, free of charge, by contacting local Bell Telephone business offices.

The film emphasizes the influence water has had upon civilizations throughout history illustrates the consequences of past and present waste, and puts the prospects for meeting our need for water in perspective through interviews and vivid sequences dealing with research in the United States and elsewhere.

### 1961 Fire Losses

There were fewer fires on lands administered by the Department of the Interior in 1961 than in 1960 and burned-over acreage reached a new low. Over 462 million acres under the Department's jurisdiction require fire protection.

In 1961, there were 3,357 fires, compared with 3,794 in 1960. The area burned during the year totaled 246,878 acres, a new low, in contrast to 504,905 acres in 1960. Forest land accounted for only 14.3 percent of the area burned.

During 1961, 2037 fires were attributable to lightning, while 1,300 fires can be traced to man-made causes. Total damage was placed at \$2,738,174 of which \$1,008,581 was in timber losses.



This year marks the centennial of the Transcontinental Railroad Land Grants, whose early history, as sug-

gested in the painting above, is filled with stories of a nation's growth across the plains.

### Anniversary Booklets

During their anniversary year the Bureau of Land Management has produced a series of commemorative booklets. One, *The Transcontinental Railroad Land Grants* describes the events which led to the grant of nearly 4 percent of the land area of the United States and to the building of the transportation links between the Mississippi and the Pacific shore. The Railroad Act was passed on July 1, 1862, and resulted in the granting of more than 91 million acres.

The following day, July 2, 1862, marked the passage of the Land Grant College Act under which more than 11 million acres were granted to States for vocational colleges. That centennial is commemorated in the booklet, *"The Land Grant Colleges"*.

Another booklet, *Landmarks in Public Land Management*, commemorates the sesquicentennial of the Bureau of Land Management.

Other anniversary booklets which may be obtained from the Director, Bureau of Land Management, Washington 25, D.C., are *Homesteads*, *The First Homesteader*, and *The Homestead Law*.

### Rogue River Film Released by BLM

"Rogue River Country," a 28-minute sound and color motion picture, is now available from the Bureau of Land Management.

The new film reviews the recreational opportunity and the wealth of natural resources found in the Rogue River Valley of southwestern Oregon. Scenes include plant and animal life, historic mining areas, white-water rapids, salmon and steelhead runs, and other features of the nationally famous area.

The 16 mm. film is available upon request for school and civic groups and conservation clubs. Prints are available from the Washington and Portland offices.

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## STICKY SUBJECT

One of nature's oddities is a sticky subject called the porcupine. A walking pincushion, the porcupine carries his own defense in the readily shed spines.

