presenting a united front in obtaining the funding authorized in the bill. Cattlemen feel it is necessary that a precedent be set, that we expect the appropriation to be made as authorized so that we might get on with the program of rehabilitating some of these rangelands.

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At the end of the talk, Pricilla Grew, Director of the Department of Conservation for the State of California, asked this question: How do you convince urban voters that grazing land has a higher priority for funding than they have considered before? Bill Swan, author of this article, answered:

From 1934 until 1976, the basic policy for the management of our public lands was the Taylor Grazing Act which stated that the Public Lands would be managed under this act until its final disposition. It was contemplated in this Act that the Public Lands would eventually be turned over to the various states or to private ownership.

Let's take a long look

Laird Noh

Historically, and in the future, forces far removed from the public lands shape the allocation of range resources. In earlier times, public lands were used to pay soldiers for winning our freedom; to build the railroads and highways; to settle the nation; to provide products to feed the industrialization of America; and to provide an escape valve for immigrants who flooded the eastern labor markets. Basically, land allocation policies of the past resulted in freeing our people, as no other people have ever been freed, from the daylight-to-darkness struggle for the basic necessities of life—food, clothing, and shelter. These policies resulted in discretionary income and unprecedented wealth, leisure, and recreation. It is a great irony that the efficient employment of our lands for the production of food, fiber, and other products, has led directly to a growing demand to employ that same land for leisure.

The world is smaller now. To an even greater extent, events beyond our shores will affect the allocation of natural resources. Oil, shifting international alliances, inflation, distrust of government, tight budgets, and, above all else, declining American economic productivity will affect rangeland policies far beyond our poor power to add or detract. The new Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Frank Church, a key man in public land policies, has recently and forcefully emphasized that America's greatest threat is the declining productivity of our economy. He notes, quite rightly, that it is our economic might that allows us to protect the interests of freedom throughout a world in turmoil. And the sobering facts are coming into focus. During the past decade, all the way across the board, government actions have caused the over-allocation of resources to nonproductive ends. Who can disagree, for instance, that BLM employees have become managers of papers—mountains of paper—not lands.

The bloom is off the environmental rose. For the first time in a decade, there was no mention of the environment in the State of the Union Speech. James Jeffords, Congressman from Vermont and Co-Chairman of the Congressional Environmental Study Conference, recently told a Wall Street Journal reporter: "We've got to regroup. The environmentalist has come to be viewed as an obstructionist rather than a savior." In most states, making the environmentalists' list of the Dirty Dozen is a stroke of good luck for a Congressman seeking re-election. Even the moral argument is changing. For awhile some were able to convince the public that wildlife and leisure time activities were somehow a higher moral or ethical use for our resources than food or energy production. To work in the private sector on Public Lands was somehow a narrow interest which didn't serve the public nearly as well as did play and leisure. That line won't wash in the years ahead, particularly with sharply rising meat prices. Signs abound that the backwash is here.

Environmentalism is viewed as a primary cause of the nation's economic ills. Increasingly, it is viewed as a threat to the nation's security, especially in matters of energy production. Unless
natural resource administrators act with caution, the constructive achievements of the environmental era, and they are many, may be lost to the detriment of us all.

But within these broad forces, our policies and practices can affect the allocation, and, certainly, the quantity and quality of resources.

Price policies are important. In the private sector, the votes of every citizen every day in the market place allocate resources. Here we have a direct measure of whether or not the hours of labor the consumer is willing to give up to purchase a product is equal to the cost of providing the product. As the desires of the public change, changing relative prices redirect resources to meet those desires. In the public sector, pricing policies seldom work that way.

In the January issue of Fortune magazine, Michael Blumen-thal, former chairman of Bendix Corporation and current Secretary of the Treasury, discusses the feelings of a businessman who goes to Washington. Blumenthal says: "One very important thing you have to learn in Washington is the difference between appearance and reality. At Bendix, it was the reality of the situation that determined whether we succeeded or not . . . In government there is no bottom line, and that is why you can be successful if you appear to be successful . . . ."

We have seen that classically illustrated in the recent battle over grazing fees and the appearance of "fair market value." History indicates the impossibility of government formula pricing schemes achieving an efficient allocation of resources, or even coming near the desired objective of the pricing formula. But to ignore, or intentionally exclude from the formula a major cost component, in this case the cost of owning the permit, is the sheerest folly. It is worse than folly; it is stupidity. According to my limited research, the typical range sheep operator in Idaho has invested over $90 per sheep in permits, more than he has invested in private lands. These are real, tangible costs ignored by federal formula. How far from reality can we get? To continue to play this insane game of ignoring the permit values is to ignore a whole host of predictable behavior patterns which result from the investment in permits.

Let's contrast the righteous thunder over fair market value pricing of the grazing resource with the pricing system for recreation on public lands. A recent press clipping from a Washington newspaper predicted, "Carter's new budget will jack up admittance fees at National Parks for the first time since 1972. The tariff at showplace parks like Yellowstone may go to $1 per person from $2 per vehicle. But park officials fear discouraging visitors." The fees in the recent Carter budget were raised 70%, to almost 5% of the cost of administering the Park System. We could show a real public demand for lamb chops priced at 5% of the cost of production.

Surely, we need to learn more about how range resources are actually distributed. Loose statements abound. The College of Forestry, Wildlife, and Range Sciences of the University of Idaho has completed a thorough analysis of our state for the Governor's Rangelands Committee. It isn't known how representative Idaho is of the West as a whole, but the figures must be instructive. Thirty per cent of the public lands in Idaho are not grazed by domestic livestock at all. Ninety per cent of the public lands are grazed by big game animals. One fourth of the federal lands in our state are in sagebrush-native grass. Three per cent are in planted grasses, mostly crested wheat. Reality walks in and shatters the appearance of the vast, crested wheat grass monocultures which have supposedly devastated wildlife habitat.

If nothing else is accomplished in the next decade, it is to be hope that we learn to cope with allotment of land to sagebrush in a rational manner. In Idaho may be seen many thousands of acres of dense sage and eroding soil, sometimes grazed, increasingly not. That soil, our most precious asset is being sacrificed to a concept of wildlife habitat which is at least partially fictitious. Why can't we talk about the proper mix of sage and other plants, instead of whether or not the dense sagebrush forests will be tampered with at all. I once spent hours arguing with the president of our State Wildlife Federation over the merits of range rehabilitation programs without moving an inch closer toward agreement. Then we took a BLM Advisory Board tour. While passing through a crested wheat grass seeding which was about 15% sage, with denser patches along the edges and rough places, I asked him how that range looked to him. "Marvelous," he responded, "just what we ought to have!" We agreed only when able to break away from the preconceived notion that range rehabilitation work results in no sage and all grass.

Perhaps allocation is the wrong word. Given the political climate and the tremendous hostilities which have built up in recent times, wouldn't we all be better off to get away from the idea that the pie is small and whatever wildlife gets will be taken away from livestock or vice versa? Why don't we concentrate for once on really trying to improve the resource for all. I predict much better progress with that approach for wildlife and food production. As budgets shrink, do we want to squander those scarce dollars on appeals, attorneys, endless studies, and tons of paper or apply them to the ground and to better management of land, not paper.

What if we were to take the approach that no permittee would be cut below his class I permit, permanently, until every effort was exhausted to improve the ranges for wildlife as well as food production? Would attitudes change? I, for one, am convinced that good range management pays. But without education and experience, even in the private sector, producers cannot always act in their own interests. It is likely that some ranchers have never experienced good range. And someone who feels his future is threatened is not receptive to instruction, especially instruction from the party who threatens.

What if the BLM were to sponsor programs in areas with grazing problems in which grazing permittees from other areas of the West, who have had economic successes with sound range management, would discuss these benefits with their fellow threatened ranchers? The agencies should remember that to successfully manage land, they must successfully manage people. The first "stewardship" program in the nation under provisions of the Rangelands Improvement Act will be tried in Challis, Idaho, in conjunction with the controversial Environmental Impact Statement by the BLM. Through Governor Evans' Rangelands Committee, a local group including wildlife and other interests will try to work out the conflicts and problems in that BLM grazing District. The ranchers are even enthusiastic about the project because for the first time they trust the parties involved are not out simply to cut their economic throats.

We should be striving to develop a climate where the ranchers' appreciation for wildlife values will flourish. The natural instinct for most humans, especially people who live on the land, is to love and appreciate wild, living things. Normally, the rancher would welcome instruction on encouraging wildlife so long as it did not threaten his future. But environmental policies of this decade are destroying that instinct. Wildlife is becoming something to fear and scorn. The snail darter and the furbish lousewort have become symbols of environmental excesses. A black-footed ferret was discovered on private lands in Montana this fall, and land owners responded by trying quickly to poison the ferret...
lest it be discovered by environmentalists. Every rancher in the

country lives in fear that an endangered animal—or plant—or insect—or whatever else—may be discovered on his property or allotment. We have made wildlife a threat to the very people who must play a critical role in its survival.

Communications—simply getting to know and understand the other guys’ problems—invariably pays dividends. Many permittees quite likely have never even met the wildlife manager for for the areas they graze. For the most part, grazing permittees are acquainted with the BLM area and district managers and the National Forest range conservationists, district rangers, and sometimes the forest supervisor. That’s it. Typically, as a management plan is developed on a BLM allotment, the permittee is suddenly confronted with a scheme to build up game animals, cut back his own grazing, without anyone ever even asking him what he thinks ought to be done. The element of surprise invariably results in strong backlash and opposition, while the participatory approach leads to success and a discovery of overlooked elements of the problem. Wildlife managers, generally, have a credibility problem with many ranchers which needs to be corrected. Rightly or wrongly, wildlife biologists have come to be looked upon as those who convinced the world that nature balances nicely and gently, without death and destruction; that neither coyotes nor eagles kill lambs, and on the rare occasions when they do, it is only the sick, weak, and genetically debilitated which are culled; and that any chemical which comes in a can or bottle is automatically evil and unnatural. For years, ranchers rolled their eyeballs upwards and struggled to remain silent while told by the professionals that burning of rangelands as a management tool was intolerable. It is ironic that only when another irrationality, the aversion to all chemical spraying, began to dominate policy did the match again become respectable. While the rancher of today learned to fear the ferret, he also learned to pray for lightning.

With tight federal budgets, communications and cooperation will surely pay great dividends for the range resources as the fight to divide the scarce dollars grows increasingly intense. With trust, cooperation, and communications, the private funds of the permittee offer hope for range improvements. With proper incentives, which will be the subject of a later panel, and adequate supervision of projects, such investments can pay well for both ranchers and wildlife. The greatest strides made in range improvements, at least in Idaho, were made back when permittees were providing over half of the funds for range improvement projects. Both wildlife and livestock benefit, for instance, when stockponds and small reservoirs are fenced and water is piped to troughs. With trust and communication such projects can be found.

New technology will increasingly be upon us. It will affect grazing, wildlife, and range management. Communications will be required to cope with and exploit it. For example, the development of Rumensin as a means of increasing the efficiency of converting grasses to meat will upset the cost relationships between private and public ranges if satisfactory policies are not developed to allow its use on public lands. As food prices rise and energy costs escalate, there will be many new products and the entire structure of meat production and transportation will change, probably with greater emphasis upon trailing livestock.

Some responsible administrators have wisely read the signs. Robert Herbst, Assistant Secretary of Interior for Fish, Wildlife & Parks, in the January 12 issue of High Country News, discusses the importance of turning away from the all or nothing concept of resource allocation toward a partnership of private and public interests. “Productive Harmony” it is called. The approach recognizes that ranching and some other human activities may even have aesthetic attractions beyond the normal economic benefits. A recognition of the economic and property interest of the affected individual can facilitate decisions which protect and restore natural resources. That sounds like a wise attitude. May other government decision makers be as far-sighted and realistic.

Sessions such as this one in Tucson can be useful or worse than useless. Some of us here today participated in a Symposium in 1977 in Washington, D.C., entitled Improving Fish and Wildlife Benefits in Range Management. I didn’t see the proceedings of the Conference until they were mailed to me for this program. I reread the presentations and the discussions and thought that Symposium had been at least of average value in stimulating ideas and constructive suggestions—until I reached the conclusions drawn by an official from the Department of Interior. To my amazement, his conclusion stated, “Livestock grazing is the single most important factor limiting wildlife production in the West. It has been and continues to be administered without adequate consideration for wildlife especially on Federally owned lands. This was the general theme of Seminar panelists.” That statement was nonsense. It turned our whole exercise into a neat policy package and provided a handy quote for the enemies of food production on the public lands. The quote has been widely circulated in recent days.

If this Conference is used in the same disgusting fashion, if it is used only as a means to justify an allocation system where the food producer is allocated only what is left after all other interests are cared for, then our time spent here today would have been better spent at home praying for summer lightning.

WANTED

Black-and-white photos of seedbed preparation and seeding equipment, raintraps, water harvesting techniques (spreaders, furrows, etc.) and fence line contrasts for inclusion in a Range Management Training Handbook for the Near East. Credit will be given to contributing individuals and/or organizations. Please send to Don Huss, Regional Range Management Officer, FAO of the U.N., P.O. Box 2223, Cairo, Egypt.