

number of sedges (*Carex* spp.) also form common types.

Riparian Vegetation

This is defined as vegetation requiring soil moisture in addition to that supplied by local precipitation. Typically, it occurs along stream banks, in meadows, and the bottoms of narrow valleys. This habitat is intermediate between uplands and truly aquatic sites. Like the alpine formation, the riparian type is relatively small in area, extremely varied, and has received little detailed study. This is unfortunate, since there is currently much concern over land use and related prob-

lems of water quality and soil erosion in the type.

Community dominants include a wide range of life forms and many species. Cottonwoods (*Populus trichocarpa* and *P. angustifolia*), alders (*Alnus incana* and *A. rhombifolia*), and white birch (*Betula papyrifera*) form common tree types. Shrub communities are dominated by species of willow (*Salix*), red osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*), and water birch (*Betula occidentalis*). Beaked sedge (*Carex rostrata*) forms a common type, as do several other sedges, Baltic rush (*Juncus balticus*), and tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*).

Curlew National Grassland

Frank Beitia and Frank Gunnell

The Curlew National Grassland of the Caribou National Forest consists of 47,600 acres of land in the extreme southern portion of Idaho. It is representative of the basin and range-type topography and is predominantly covered with sagebrush and crested wheatgrass. Over 35,000 acres of native range was cultivated and farmed in the early 1900's. This land is capable of producing vegetation such as alfalfa, small burnett species, and introduced wheatgrasses as a part of grassland agriculture. Sagebrush, bitterbrush, serviceberry, native grasses, and forbs occupy the unfarmed land.

The lands currently within the Curlew National Grassland were acquired from private individuals under Title 111 of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act. During the late 1920's and early 1930's these lands failed to provide a sustained livelihood. In many places the land was badly eroded. The Soil Conservation Service administered the lands from 1938 to 1954 and carried out an intensive rehabilitation program. Originally there was approximately 168,000 acres in and adjacent to Curlew Valley that comprised the original land utilization project.

In April 1965, well-known author and range specialist Perry Plummer made a tour of the Curlew National Grassland and documented the following: "The trip was highly interesting for me since I had participated in the establishment of some experimental seeding plots in the general area in the late 1930's. This was the period when the Resettlement Administration was relocating many of the marginal farmers to other areas. Dust storms were then characteristic. The contrast in my mind between then and now was tremendous. Waving stands of perennial grass had replaced the fields abandoned to Russian thistle and old stubble. The sand dunes along some of the fences have apparently vanished. All the vacant houses had been removed, and the once dusty lanes we traveled had been replaced with either gravel or oil roads. The CCC camp buildings at Grandine had been all removed; however, the Forest maintains what appear to be

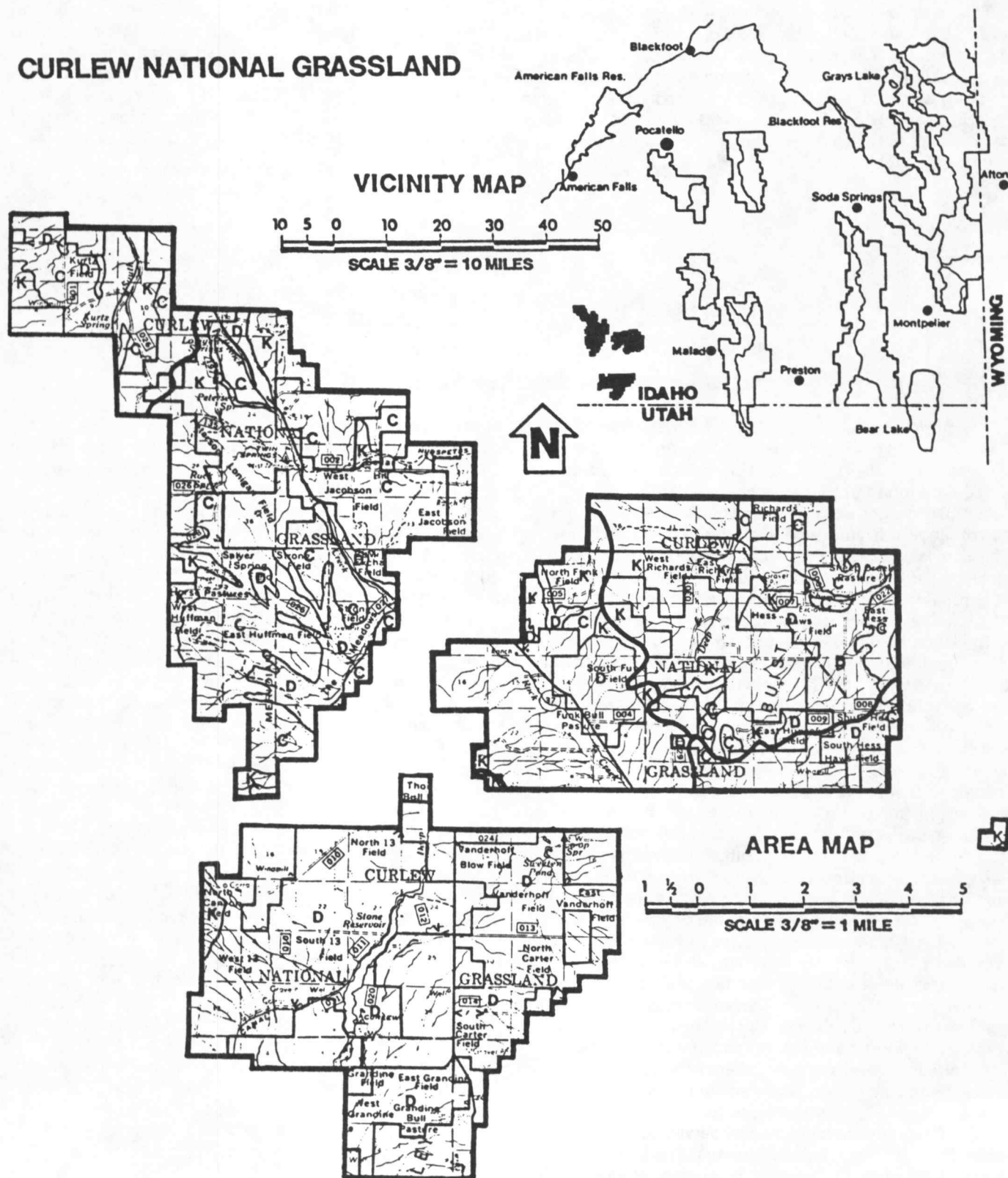
some good storehouses along with a trailer house on the same location. I was, to say the least, very much impressed with the remarkable transition from what had been marginal farming to what looked like prosperous grazing land."

In 1954, 47,600 acres of the land lying within the Curlew Valley were turned over to the Forest Service to be administered as National Grassland within the Department of Agriculture. Since the establishment of the project some of the original land has been returned to private ownership and a considerable acreage adjacent to Curlew Valley is administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The Curlew National Grassland has been managed to promote the development of Grassland agriculture. These lands have been intensively managed for the multiple-use and sustained-yield of the associated resources and products with assistance from the Soil Conservation Service, Intermountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, universities, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Agricultural Research Service, and the local livestock operators.

The Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act directed that these acquired lands should promote the development of grassland agriculture and sustained-yield management of the forage, fish and wildlife, water, and recreation resources in areas of which they are a part. The practices used should demonstrate sound and practical principles of land use and serve as models to show how responsive government can positively affect economical, cooperative planning and management at the local level. Grazing Associations under terms of appropriate agreements are used to carry out many of these objectives.

Much of the federally owned land is intermingled with associated private and other lands into fenced logical operable pastures, which creates an atmosphere for the development of sound land conservation and utilization practices. These lands serve as a range management laboratory for testing latest techniques in grassland agriculture and to

CURLEW NATIONAL GRASSLAND



determine and demonstrate sound management and sustained production.

Resource Management Practices

Livestock grazing is and will continue to be the predominant resource output on the Curlew National Grassland. The Grassland management plan promotes the development and demonstrates the concepts of grassland agriculture and sustained-yield management of forage, fish and wildlife, water, and recreation resources.



Cattle being moved in the Strong Field-Curlew National Grassland.

The Curlew and Buist Fields Cattle Associations are authorized to graze 3,256 cattle annually for 29,000 AUM's of grazing. Actual AUM's derived depends on spring moisture conditions. The two allotments are divided into separate pastures and are intensively managed under a deferred rotation system of grazing. Since the Forest Service assumed the administration of the National Grassland in 1954, there have been two increases in cattle numbers. In 1965 there was a 350 cattle increase and in 1968 there was a 287 increase for a total of 637 cattle. These increases were made possible because of forage and watering facility improvements and the intensive management practices that have been implemented.

Many of the grazing practices and types of improvements that were initially implemented on the National Grassland can be observed on adjacent ranches today. In turn some of the projects put into use on the Grassland were derived from practices developed on private lands. Windbreaks and grassed water-ways are examples of land use activities that extend beyond livestock grazing practice and can be observed on public and private lands in the Curlew Valley.

The majority of the resources are currently in satisfactory condition. However, the once-farmed lands require some type of vegetal treatment every 12 to 20 years to maintain suitable productivity for the present uses. Most of the lands have been seeded primarily to crested wheatgrass, but the original dominant vegetation, sagebrush, will reestablish unless control measures are taken. Revegetation practices have introduced alfalfa, intermediate wheatgrass and some shrubs. A mountain brush zone occurs in limited areas above 6,000 feet and is characterized by serviceberry, snowberry, bitterbrush, native forbs and grasses. The Curlew National Grassland provides some of the most productive rangelands in the Intermountain Range. The grazing associations have

made considerable contributions toward improved land management including the construction and maintenance of range improvements. Included in these improvements are 21 miles of waterlines, 32 water troughs, and 148 miles of fence.

A Curlew National Grassland Development Plan was approved and implemented in 1970. Land management activities such as water developments, windbreaks, chemical treatment, burning, chaining, plowing, and seeding have been a part of the program. The plan was updated in 1979. Based on the work done to date for the wildlife resources, for every dollar invested there has been a \$5.00 return. One area of major interest has been the habitat improvement work that has expanded the range of the sharptail grouse. Prior to



Sage grouse in the South Huffman Field-Curlew National Grassland.

1970, sharptail grouse were not observed in Curlew Valley south of Holbrook. Today they are common in the windbreaks and fields several miles south of Holbrook.

The winter habitat for pheasants and partridge has been significantly enhanced by the development of 25 miles of windbreak plantings. The construction and expansion of the 120-acre Sweeten Pond development has improved the Canada goose and duck habitat. About 50 geese, 400 ducks and several hundred other shore birds are produced annually as a result of this improvement.

The public awareness of the National Grassland has increased rapidly in recent years. Approximately 17,000 recreation visitor days are spent on the National Grassland annually. Recreational opportunities have been expanded by the development of campground facilities in association with the boating and fishing on Stone Reservoir.

Other recreational activities include snowmobiling, camping, trapping, bird watching, field trials, fishing, and hunting. The closure of some adjacent private lands to recreational activities has demonstrated the value of public lands to meet recreational needs.

Stone Reservoir is a privately owned reservoir south of Holbrook and is used for irrigation purposes. The National Grasslands surrounds the reservoir and provides public access to a popular year-round fishing reservoir. Approximately 2,000 visitor days are spent annually in conjunction with the reservoir.

The June 2, 1982, edition of the Southern Idaho magazine described the Curlew National Grassland as "a real live example of multiple-use of public lands. There are no locked gates and there are no, No Trespassing Signs." The present land management plan is designed to offer as many kinds of compatible public use as possible on the lands which are owned and supported by the taxpayer.

Control of big sagebrush invasion into all of the units within the Grassland presents the greatest challenge for management and control. Without its control outputs in grazing, recreation and wildlife will decrease. A combination of proven and new management practices and resource improvements activities need to be applied in an economical and demonstrative manner which will maintain and enhance all other related resources.

Opportunities exist to work with the livestock associations, BLM, SCS, State Fish and Game, universities, and research communities to develop new vegetative species and activity management programs which will control big sage and suppress its rapid return. This needs to be done

while maintaining and/or improving recreation, grazing, wildlife, and fish opportunities.

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Idaho State Parks: Discovering the Undiscovered America

Rick Just

Idaho's diversity is well represented in its state parks. They offer a wide variety of outdoor recreation activities in settings ranging from desert dunes to wooded lakes.

More detailed information on the following parks is available from Idaho State Parks, Statehouse Mail, Boise, ID 83720.

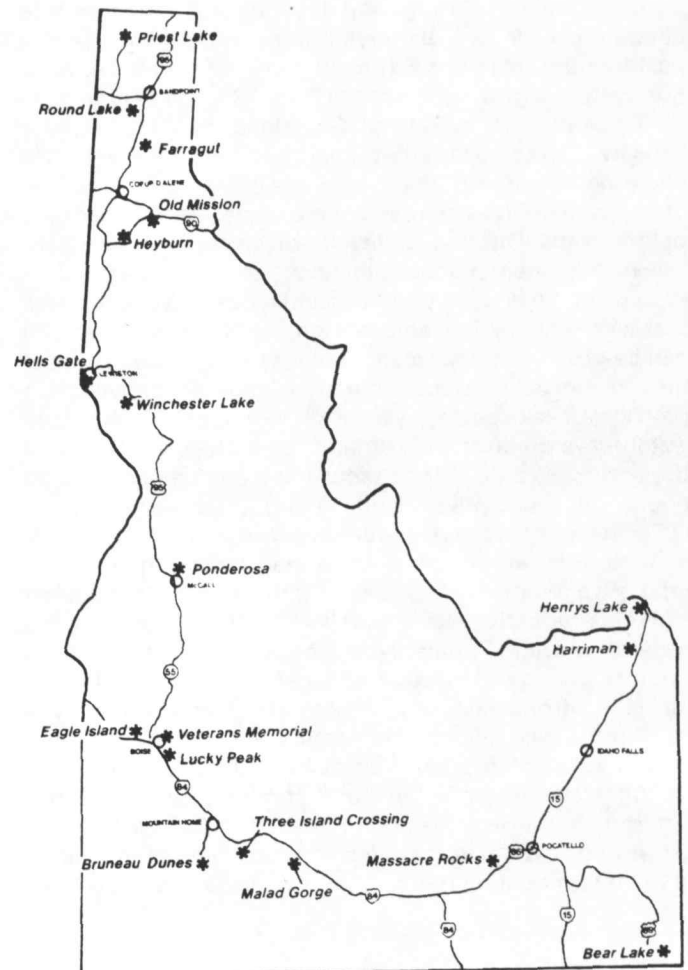
Northern Idaho Parks

Round Lake

Round Lake campsites, ten miles south of Sandpoint off US 95, are shaded all day by towering western red cedar, western hemlock, ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, and western larch. The shallow lake is rimmed with grasses and water lilies, from which bullfrogs sing their evening chorus. The animal community includes turtles, muskrat, beaver, squirrels, chipmunks, porcupines, raccoons, bobcat white-tailed deer, and birds ranging from the heron to the hummingbird. Swimming, hiking, and fishing are the most popular activities.

Farragut

Sprawling at the foot of the Coeur d'Alene and Bitterroot Mountain ranges, four miles east of Athol on state highway 54, this four-season vacationer's paradise awaits you with pristine forests of fir, cedar, ponderosa pine, and abundant wildlife. The crystal clear, azure blue waters of Idaho's largest lake—Pend Oreille, with its 1,150 foot depths is astonishing! The 4,000 acre park offers miles of hiking and horse trails, modern campsites, and extensive group facilities. Farragut is unique in its diversity, from Buttonhook Bay to the 60,000 person capacity natural amphitheater; from the shooting ranges to a fascinating park museum.



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