

U.S. Agencies Seek to Move Mine Cabins

By Associated Press

Federal agencies are trying to get 150 to 200 houses and cabins removed from mining claims in Oregon.

Most are in Josephine and Jackson counties.

The agencies call the occupants squatters who have no right to the land.

They say the mining claims are without mineral value, so no longer can be occupied. They are pursuing a slow, steady campaign, they say, to get long-established houses removed. And they add they are moving aggressively against recent construction.

Sharp Blast

All this has brought a sharp and bitter blast from Hollis M. Dole, director of the state Department of Geology and Mineral Industries.

"If ever there was a dead and dying industry, it is mining," said Dole. "And the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service would deliver the coup de grace."

Mineral claim locators, said Dole in the current issue of Ore-Bin, publication of his department, have "exclusive right of possession and enjoyment of all the surface included within the lines of their location." That, he said, is law. And he added, it "should not be open to administrative frustration."

Then Dole added his hope that BLM field employees have not been told how to "contrive some administrative procedure" to get around the law.

Stirred Him Up

What stirred Dole particularly was his from a 1961 BLM report:

"The wild character of the Pacific Northwest 50 years ago required a miner to live near his work for efficient operation and for the protection of his equipment. Today, a miner can often live in a nearby town and commute to his mining operation. Where this is possible, residence on the claim is unnecessary and seldom desirable since a residence could conflict with the uses of surface resources."

It is a statement, Dole said, in flat contradiction to law.

He said it is all a part of an effort "to build up ill will toward the miners."

Russell Getty, director of the Portland BLM office in which the statement was prepared, said it was unfortunately phrased. BLM headquarters in Washington, he said, raised an eyebrow over it and wanted to know where authority for such a thing was found.

If there is a valid claim,

Getty added, miners can probably build a house on the claim without trouble. But, he went on, it would be a mistake for one to rush in and build before validity of the claim was established.

And, put in Jack Groom, chief of the minerals management branch of the Forest Service in Portland, "We are so seldom dealing with valid claims."

It is the BLM and Forest Service view that a mining claim too often is a false for a summer home in the forest beside a fishing stream. They cite a \$75,000 home on the Rogue River downstream from Grants Pass.

Dole dissents. He agrees there are some abuses; but he says new construction is needed on new locations and that the great majority are small shacks built by and used by miners.

Getty says Dole is "a dedicated mining man. And he is suspicious of us."

Grower Tests Picking Device

ST. PAUL, Ore. (AP) — How about picking strawberries while laying down in the shade and listening to music?

Grower Richard Kirk of St. Paul says it's possible and has done something about it.

Kirk has developed a conveyor belt-equipped machine that propels 14 pickers along rows of berries. He said it may triple the speed in harvesting his 20 acres.

The machine allows pickers to lay down as they work. Kirk has rigged a tarpaulin above the machine to protect the pickers from rain, and shade them from the sun. Also he has added music by installing a radio.

The device had its first trial this week and although there were a few kinks, things went smoothly.

After the strawberries are harvested, Kirk plans to try the device out on cucumbers.

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