

Underground Lake Is Restoring Big Basin

Green Fields Of Early Era Appear Again

By PHIL F. BROGAN
Bulletin Staff Writer

Reclamation through use of pumps is bringing into production a new acreage in Central Oregon.

This land is in the tri-basin region of northern Lake county — Fort Rock, Silver Lake and Christmas Lake.

Eventually, it has been estimated, between 25,000 and 30,000 acres will be under irrigation in the land which long ago was covered by a huge lake.

Reclamation is being made possible through extension of a Mid-state Electric Co-operative power line from LaPine to the basin. The cost was about \$794,000.

This is the second crop season on the project. Midsummer found 42 pumps in operation in the area, with 130 users listed. Present acreage under irrigation is not great, only a few thousand. A big increase is expected in the coming season.

In July, a Bend Chamber delegation visited the basin, as guests of the Northern Lake County Water Users' Association. They saw green fields covering areas across which sand drifted only a few years ago.

Improvement Began in Twenties — And ranchers in the area, said they were well pleased with their first crops, chiefly alfalfa and grains.

Not all ranches on the project are new. One of the older ones is "The Poplars," owned by Mr. and Mrs. Bud Parks. It was one of the state's experiment ranches in the early 'twenties when irrigation through pumping from pools of ground water was first tried. Diesel pumps and windmills were used.

Now electricity from distant Bonneville reaches parts of the basin, and will be extended when the region develops further.

The story of the basin dates back to the early years of the century. In those years homesteaders from all parts of the country came into interior Oregon.

More Rain Fell Years Ago — It was a time when precipitation was much heavier than at present. At first, homesteaders did well in the great valleys that form part of the most northerly extension of the Great Basin into Oregon.

Scores of homes took shape from Fort Rock east across the Christmas Lake valley, and southwest into the Thorne and Silver Lake regions. Several towns came into existence. One of these was Fremont, the location of a cheese factory. Lush meadowlands covered the valley.

Then came the dry era. The water level dropped. Most of the homesteaders disappeared.

It was the late Henry M. Parks, early-day state geologist, who saw the possibility of tapping for irrigation the "lake that went underground." Oregon established several state farms in the basin to test the possibility of irrigation through pumping. These pointed to the feasibility of a more extensive undertaking.

Underground Water Level Rising — Then came the move that brought Bonneville power to LaPine, and the recent extension of a line into northern Lake county. That power is now being used to bring the semi-artesian water to the surface. Holes must be drilled to varying depths, but when tapped the water comes within "easy reaching distance" of the surface.

Under the new ground water regulations, the state closely regulates the issuance of permits for drilling, to make sure there is no dangerous drawdown of water in any area. The estimated inflow to the basin annually is about 75,000 acre feet. Water level tests under state supervision are now under way in 70 wells.

The water level of the subterranean lake under the basin is rising at present, apparently the result of heavy precipitation in the tributary area several years back. This is the only area in the state this year where a rising water level has been recorded. The inflow lag is believed to cover a six or seven year period; that is, it takes about that time for water falling in the uplands to find its way into the "basin" known to exist in the Fort Rock, Silver Lake, Summer Lake basins.

Ranchers Proceed Cautiously — Development of the basin is being handled cautiously, with ranchers virtually feeling their way in the use of water and the planting of crops. There has been no heavy rush for the basin lands, and residents of the area believe this is a desirable condition.

Two communities, Silver Lake and Fort Rock, serve the trio of basins in which electricity lights many homes, as well as generator power for the pumping of cool water from the hidden lake.

There are 1,946,240 acres of land in Deschutes county. In 1925 there was only 5.6 per cent of this in farms of all kinds, a total of 109,622 acres. By 1954 farms covered more than three times as much. The U. S. figure was 17.4 per cent or 337,810 acres.

When flavoring a roast with herbs, add them toward the end of the cooking period.



"THE POPLARS" — One of Central Oregon's best known ranches is "The Poplars," home of Mr. and Mrs. Bud Parks, at Fort Rock. This is a summer view of the Parks' home. Visible above the trees, but now a bit out of date, is a windmill. Water is now pumped electrically. (Bulletin Photo)



LIFE OF THE LAND — This stream, flush with water needed for the irrigation of Fort Rock land, is pumped to the surface by use of electricity. Both flood and sprinkler irrigation are in use.



WATER FROM THE DEEP — The cold stream of water shown pouring from a pipeline is being pumped from semi-artesian wells in the Fort Rock basin through use of electricity. (Bend Bulletin Photo)

Twenty per cent of Deschutes county farms are under 10 acres each; 4.1 per cent more than 1,000 acres each. The average is less than 50 acres.

There's a mountain called "The Wife" in the Cascades. Little woman — nearly 500 feet shorter than "The Husband." No mind gap, though; over 7,000 feet high.

Portland Woman Praises Central Oregon Springs

By GRACE F. THOMPSON
Special to The Bulletin

PORTLAND — Many Oregonians rush to distant or neighboring states in an effort to improve their health, "to follow the sun," or to seek recreation before they have thoroughly explored the possibilities for exciting vacations or beneficial health sojourns almost on their doorstep.

Entirely too many of us are only partially informed regarding the almost unlimited and varied facilities which are ours to command as a result of gradations in Oregon's topography and weather patterns.

Eons ago, before the advent of the white man, the Warm Springs Indians bathed themselves, washed their clothes and tanned their deer hides in the hot mineral springs approximately 70 miles east of Mount Hood. The springs are situated on the banks of the Warm Springs River and the hot and cold waters almost mingle.

This natural phenomenon is now called Kalmecut Hot Springs and is operated as a health resort.

For many months each year the days are bright and cheerful — and the hot mineral water is always available for swimming; and mingling provides excellent swimming. The large outdoor swimming pool provides excellent swimming. The water is warmed by a perpetual flow from the hot springs.

If one is seeking the picturesque, the setting is perfect. Against a bright blue sky with the sunshine of Central Oregon, the mountains of rock surrounding this hidden valley are profusely reminiscent of temples, animals' heads and profiles of prehistoric man.

The canyon along the Warm Springs River has rocky crevices in the hill sides and the panorama of color in the cliffs ranges from pale green to bright red. One can easily imagine a warrior on horseback surveying the scene from the flat topped rock across the river, and would not be too surprised to see a smoke signal ascending into the close air.

While many of us have yearned to visit California's Palm Springs, we have probably been deterred by the distance and the cost of accommodations.

Grass Seed Test Inspection Made

By HELEN PARKS
Bulletin Correspondent

FORT ROCK — The annual inspection of field trial plantings of new grasses and legumes in the Fort Rock-Silver Lake Soil Conservation District was made recently by Dr. A. L. Hafnerichter of Portland. Associated with him were John Schwendiman of Pullman, Wash., SCS technician; Fred Greenfield, SCS range specialist, Bend, and Duane Crane, local work-unit conservationist.

The purpose of the inspection, it was pointed out, is an on the ground appraisal to determine whether varieties introduced are as good as, not as good as, or better than what is normally grown. The first of 25 local plantings were made in 1953. Nine of them were visited on this trip.

Hafnerichter, who is Washington, D.C. field representative for the seven western states, Alaska and Hawaii, described the methods used in establishing trial plantings and seed-increase fields. The Plant Materials center at Pullman, he stated, has tested some 15,000 grasses and legumes and has introduced since 1935 24 new varieties not planted before.

The center selects a new variety which is felt to be suitable for a specific district, then through the local office and supervisors of the district locate a co-operator who will make a trial planting as a comparison with what normally grows there.

For the seed increase field program a co-operator is selected who by aptitude could be a seed grower. Foundation seed is furnished and maintained. Right soil and proper management are important in such fields.

Schwendiman, in charge of this work in Eastern Oregon, Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho, and Hafnerichter also included inspections at Bend, Redmond and Madras on this trip.



"HE'S OUT!" — Bill 'Bebout' is caricatured on a decision at first base during action in the recent Little League sectional tournament, held in Bend. Bebout tells the ump's side of the story in the column below. (Sketch by Jack Judd)

Bebout Tells What It's Like to Be an Umpire

No Bed of Roses

By WILLIAM BEBOUT
Bulletin Staff Writer

Anywhere but in a ball park the average American baseball fan is a normal person. When that same baseball fan is sitting in the stands behind home plate he is transformed by some strange phenomenon into an illogical, raving lunatic.

This ardent baseball nut is convinced that his team can do no wrong. When a player on his favorite nine boots the ball, it's because of the poor condition of the field and those base hits by the

The average umpire's equipment costs a total of nearly \$200. Ball and strike indicators, a cap for umpiring behind the plate and another type for the bases, two different kinds of special shoes, protector, shin guards, brushes and a dark blue suit are required. It usually takes the first year's pay to cover the cost of the equipment.

Many umpires are former ball players who are not able to continue playing the game. Others may have been ardent fans for a long time and decided to follow the game in a more active capacity. One thing all good umpires have in common is a deep love of baseball.

The players and fans see only one side of the game. The umpire sees it from both sides and as a result gets more out of it.

Ball Hits Ump — Hooray! An ump must have a complete knowledge of the rules and must be able to make decisions quickly and accurately.

Some of the games which I have umpired this season have been a lot of fun and others have been nightmares.

Sometimes a coach will complain about every call, even when you think he knows it's right. He thinks the fans and his team expect it. These coaches make the ump's life miserable.

Once in a while a coach will come up after a game and say "nice game, ump." Others will just walk by and groan.

Working behind the plate is great fun. I always seem to manage to get hit with the ball. A ball on the elbow really hurts. This pleases the fans immensely. They cheer loudly and suggest that the pitcher aim more accurately next time.

Decisions on rule interpretations must be made by the plate umpire. He is usually aided in this task by two coaches and several players. One group yells into one ear and another group into the other ear. This makes it very easy to think.

On my left sleeve I wear the insignia of the National Baseball Congress Association of Umpires. The emblem reads — N.B.C. Association of Approved Umpires. This greatly amuses the spectators.

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