

RECEIPTS FROM PUBLIC LANDS

The following are facts and statements furnished by J. W. Brewer, Farm Land Specialist and member of Irrigation & Drainage Committee of the Oregon State Chamber of Commerce.

Below are given the figures showing the receipts from the sale of Public Lands to government of the reclamation States of the West, the major portion of which fund is transferred to the National Reclamation Fund and used by the Government in the reclamation of arid and swamp lands of the West. Also is shown the funds expended by the Reclamation Service in the various States.

| STATE | Receipts from Sale of Public Lands, 1918. | Not Investment by the Reclamation Service on June 30, 1918. | Percent of receipts returned to the States. |
|------------|--|--|---|
| Arizona | \$1,533,249 | \$17,918,345 | 1100% |
| California | 6,281,762 | 2,760,468 | 50% |
| Colorado | 8,292,446 | 9,761,709 | 106% |
| Idaho | 5,918,338 | 16,728,842 | 283% |
| Kansas | 1,915,328 | 328,214 | 34% |
| Montana | 12,408,414 | 12,792,679 | 100% |
| Nebraska | 1,928,185 | 6,212,164 | 32% |
| Nevada | 691,327 | 6,016,760 | 85% |
| N. Mexico | 4,714,158 | 5,710,088 | 122% |
| S. Dakota | 12,731,520 | 1,978,525 | 16% |
| Oklahoma | 5,867,860 | 83,435 | 1% |
| Oregon | 10,871,688 | 4,442,585 | 41% |
| S. Dakota | 1,273,575 | 3,394,352 | 46% |
| Texas | None | 2,716,485 | None |
| Utah | 2,337,848 | 2,387,158 | 145% |
| Wash. | 7,021,684 | 9,650,796 | 137% |
| Wyoming | 5,296,140 | 7,760,940 | 146% |

The original plan of the Government was to return to each State a sum equal to the amount contributed by said State less a percentage for overhead expenses. In the early history of the Reclamation Service, construction of projects was begun in a number of the States and in order to carry on the work and complete the projects it became necessary to borrow from the Reclamation funds of other States. Soon the project work in some of the States assumed a proportion beyond the possible receipts from the sale of Public Lands in those States. It was then that the original plan was repudiated and new rules adopted which provided that the reclamation receipts be placed in one general fund and for general expenditure on reclamation work without regard to the receipts from the State.

This proved a great value to some of the States, while others were forced to suffer accordingly. The figures shown above but prove the statement. Arizona received 1100% of her contribution and Nevada 85%. With the exception of Oregon, all of the northwest States have received an amount equal or greatly in excess of the contributions; Idaho 283%, Montana 100%, Utah 145%, and Washington 137%, while Oregon has received but 41%. It will be noted that Kansas, North Dakota and Oklahoma have received less than has Oregon, but there is a reason in that there was not in those States the need for irrigation reclamation as there was and is in Oregon. In this state with the land and soil, water available and climatic conditions excellent, there is a crying need for reclamation. Thousands of acres now almost barren, could be made produce wonderful crops.

While there no longer exists any legal obligation upon the part of the Government to return to Oregon the \$6,500,000, which is the excess of contribution over reclamation investment, yet there still remains the moral obligation.

This sum should come to the State in addition to a just percentage of any future appropriations for general reclamation work. If the people of Oregon will but study the comparative figures given above, they cannot help but realize that the State has not been justly treated.

Every agency in the State and every tax payer has an interest, either directly or indirectly in this matter, and a united effort should be put forth to secure a just expenditure of reclamation funds here. Every acre irrigated adds to the taxable value of the State and increases Oregon's production area."


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