

News Article, Forest Reserve Created at Last

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FOREST RESERVE CREATED AT LAST

President Sets Aside Blue Mountains for Timber Purposes

AREA GREATLY REDUCED

**Cutting out Agricultural Land, Reserve Includes 2,627,270 Acres.
Water Protected and Mining and Grazing Allowed**

OREGONIAN NEWS BUREAU, Washington, March 17 – President Roosevelt, on recommendation of the Forest Service, has signed a proclamation creating the Blue Mountain Forest Reserve in Eastern Oregon to embrace 2,627,270 acres. The reserve as created follows the general lines of the temporary withdrawal made three years ago, with the exception of 200,000 acres in the valley of the Silvies River, which has been eliminated because of the agricultural nature of the land. Around the edge of the withdrawal small tracts of agricultural and school land have been eliminated and the boundaries are so drawn as to exclude all land lying along the border which has passed into private ownership under any public land laws.

The original Blue Mountain withdrawal embraced more than 3,000,000 acres. About 500,000 acres have been left out so as to make the reserve a compact body of forest land.

Opposition Has Died Out.

Most of the opposition raised against the creation of the reserve at the time of the withdrawal was first made has subsided, and the people of Eastern Oregon are now, with few exceptions, satisfied that its establishment is to their interest, particularly since assurance is given that the Blue Mountain Range will be open to grazing under such restrictions as to protect the grazing areas in all other forest reserves. The special regulations governing grazing in the Blue Mountains have not yet been prepared, but will be issued shortly.

Steps will be taken looking to the appointment of a Forest Supervisor to have general charge of the reserve, together with the appointment of a full force of forest rangers. All these officers are now under the classified service, and will be filled after examination. A Supervisor will probably be designated from among the experienced forest officers now in the service.

Preserve Water Resources.

The Forest Service, in announcing the creation of the Blue Mountain reserve, makes a statement of its purposes and its benefits. The following extracts are made from that report:

“The Blue Mountain reserve contains numerous headwaters of the John Day, Umatilla, Malheur, Silvies and other rivers, which have important bearings upon the work of the Reclamation Service in that state. The success of the widely separated Umatilla, Malheur and Silver Creek irrigation projects depends in a large measure upon conservation of the water supply within the great drainage area embraced in this reserve. The creation of the reserve will have a direct effect in the bringing about the agricultural development of a great portion of the state lying east of the Cascade Mountains, which needs only irrigation to develop fertility of millions of acres. The land in the mountain regions embraced in the forest reserves will be carefully patrolled at Government expense at all times to prevent disastrous fires, and all other possible efforts will be made to sustain and regulate stream-flow to those regions.

Resources Will Be Used.

“While the tracts thus reserved for the application of scientific principles in conserving and utilizing waterflow will be made to conduct directly toward the development of other regions, they will in no sense be withdrawn from use by the public for all legitimate purposes. On the contrary, the timber, water and herbage – mineral and other resources – will remain open to the use of the people and the control exercised by the Government will be directed toward bringing the land to the highest productivity in the interest of the various industries involved. Forested land will be administered with a view to insuring a continuous supply of timber to meet local demands, while the fullest utilization of the grazing products consistent with the permanent use of the range will be allowed. Every effort will be made by the Government to prevent the destruction and wasteful use of the resources in order to husband them properly for the use of the people.”

Delayed By Land Frauds.

The Blue Mountain reserve would have been created a year ago but for the fact that the papers and records in relation thereto were in possession of the Federal Court at Portland for use in land fraud trials. More records are still there, but enough data was returned to Washington to enable the President to act intelligently. Now that the lieu land law has been repealed, there is no further danger of lieu selection frauds on the part of settlers who made speculative entries in the Blue Mountain region.