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October 17, 1942

LANDS DIVISION - WRA

Report of Activities - July 1 to September 30, 1942

Completion of Site Selection

In the three months period ending June 30, 1942 the Lands Division of WRA, with the assistance of numerous public agencies, selected eight relocation areas* which were recommended to and approved by the Army. A total of more than 300 proposed areas were considered by the Lands Division and over 100 of these were given careful field investigation. Due to the rapidity with which it was necessary to handle this large volume of work it was impossible to keep the files complete and fully indexed. The Central Utah War Relocation Area was the last of the eight areas to be approved and this was done in the latter part of June.

During the month of July a complete check was made of all maps and correspondence and a summary card system was set up. Summaries were prepared for all proposed areas giving the location, total acres, irrigable and cropped acres, source and quality of water supply, climate, ownership, agency making proposal, and other significant information.

When the Regional Offices were set up at Denver and Little Rock, duplicate copies were made of all essential file material for the states of Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Kansas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Arkansas, New Mexico and Colorado. All the original records for these states were sent to the Denver and Little Rock Regional Offices and duplicate records were kept in the San Francisco Regional Office.

* Jerome and Rohwer Relocation Areas not included.

Perimeter Descriptions and Army Directives

In accordance with the provisions of Proclamation 8, Western Defense Command and Fourth Army, perimeter legal descriptions were prepared for Manzanar, Colorado River, Tule Lake, Gila River, Minidoka, and Central Utah War Relocation Project Areas. Maps showing the areas involved were also prepared. In all cases but the Central Utah War Relocation Area, boundaries as originally approved were changed and several of these changes involved careful checking of records and correspondence with War Relocation Projects and other public agencies. When the final areas were decided upon the legal description of the outside boundaries of the area were determined.

For each of the six relocation areas a directive was prepared and submitted to the Army requesting that appropriate orders be issued defining the exterior boundaries of the War Relocation Project Areas so that these areas could be posted.

Special Reports for the American Red Cross

The American Red Cross requested the WRA to prepare and submit to it a brief report on each of the 10 War Relocation Areas. A report was prepared for each of these areas giving the location, size, elevation, climate, soils, irrigation facilities, status of construction of the relocation center, and agricultural and industrial opportunities.

Report Requested by the State Department

The State Department requested the WRA to submit to it a report in order that it might have the facts necessary to answer complaints

of the Japanese government regarding the treatment which is being received by Japanese evacuees. A report was prepared by this Division which placed particular emphasis on the climatic conditions, agricultural and industrial opportunities, water supply, power and transportation facilities, fire hazards, and problems of sewage disposal and public health.

Special Land Problems - Tule Lake War Relocation Area

(a) Considerable difficulty has been encountered in regard to determining the exact area needed for this project and the status of certain improvements on the land. A field trip was made to this project to secure necessary information to settle these problems. This investigation consisted of an appraisal of certain lands and buildings and a determination of the additional land to be included in the project, and the best method for obtaining certain buildings and improvements necessary to the project. It was eventually determined that all private land and improvements on the project should be purchased rather than leased. Consequently, descriptions of all land and improvements on the project were made and submitted to the Army with appropriate directives.

(b) In order to prevent difficulties between hunters and evacuees at the Tule Lake War Relocation Project Area, it was requested that the State Division of Fish and Game declare as a game refuge, a strip of land extending about one-half mile around the north, east, and south boundaries of the Relocation Area. A perimeter description

together with a map delineating this half mile zone, was prepared and submitted to the Division of Fish and Game for its consideration. In order to similarly prevent hunting on the west side of the Project Area, interviews were held with representatives of the Fish and Wildlife Service in order to find out if they contemplated continuing the prohibition of hunting in their game refuge which lies adjacent to the west and south boundary of the Tule Lake War Relocation Project Area. The Fish and Wildlife Service has indicated that it will keep that portion of its game refuge closed to hunting.

(c) The County of Modoc has been leasing a gravel pit from the Bureau of Reclamation from which it gets gravel to gravel the county roads. This gravel pit is located within the boundaries of the Tule Lake War Relocation Area. Modoc County asked the WRA if it could continue to take gravel under this lease. The Lands Division has checked this situation with the Bureau of Reclamation and with the Project and arrangements are being completed for the County to continue taking gravel from this pit.

(d) The Lands Division was requested to check the status of a five-room house built by the State Division of Fish and Game, which is situated within the boundaries of the Relocation Area. Recommendations were made that this house be leased by WRA.

Assistance to Other Divisions

(a) The Lands Division has assisted in the development of procedure to be used in obtaining adequate priority assistance for

projects involving the development of land and improvements on the various War Relocation Project Areas in the San Francisco Region.

(b) This Division has been giving assistance to the Fire Control Division regarding problems related to building improvements for all of the 10 War Relocation Areas.

(c) Information has been given on numerous occasions to other Divisions regarding the legal descriptions of land, status of water supplies and water rights, and tenure status of land and improvements in the War Relocation Areas.

Miscellaneous Activities

(a) From time to time requests have been received from WCCA and other public agencies which involve land problems. Answering these requests often involves checking the status of the land and the preparation of maps.

(b) Private citizens continue to suggest areas which they believe are suitable for relocation purposes or to request that maps and other illustrative material, previously submitted, be returned.