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INFORMATION

## Arizona Game and Fish Commission

ARIZONA STATE BUILDING

Phoenix, Arizona

*[Handwritten signature]*

Dec. 1, 1947

Dear Sir:

To serve the purpose of fully advising those who are interested in the Fort Huachuca matter of the facts which have developed to date, we have prepared the attached resume of factual data pertaining thereto.

Yours very truly,

*[Handwritten signature of H. L. Reid]*  
H. L. Reid  
State Game and Fish Director

ARIZONA GAME AND FISH COMMISSION  
DECEMBER 1, 1947

MEMORANDUM RE FORT HUACHUCA:

Fort Huachuca is located in the extreme southeast corner of Cochise County, Arizona. The original Fort area was withdrawn from public domain for Military use by two Executive Orders, the first in 1881 and the second in 1883. These Orders withdrew 44,760 acres of public domain for military use. Approximately 50% of this area is mountainous and the balance is foot hills and relatively level grass lands.

During world war two an additional area of 31,742 acres was acquired by the War Department supplemental to the original withdrawal for use as an artillery range. This artillery range joins the northeast corner of the original withdrawn area and extends eastward to the San Pedro River.

On April 7, 1947, upon learning that the original Ft. Huachuca might be declared surplus by the War Department, the Arizona Game and Fish Commission made informal application to the War Assets Administration for the land area of the original withdrawal (44,760 acres) only. The artillery range area was not included in their request since this land had been removed from livestock production and the Game Department had no desire to provoke any controversy which might ensue. Their application was for the original withdrawal only which, since 1883, had not been utilized for commercial livestock grazing. The application stated that in the event of their acquisition of the lands such lands would be open to all federal and other agencies for scientific investigation and any other legitimate purposes which would not conflict with wildlife management.

Copies of this application were sent to all Members of Arizona's Congressional delegation requesting their support. Either sympathetic consideration or active support or both were forthcoming from all agencies and individuals contacted, including the Congressional delegation, the Arizona National Guard, the War Assets Administration, the field office of the army engineer, the State Surplus Property Purchasing Agent and the Governor of Arizona.

This status maintained until early June, 1947, when a committee of the Arizona Cattlegrowers Association proposed that the University of Arizona make application for the area for use as an animal husbandry range. When the officials of the University appeared to take no cognizance of the publicized desire of the Game Department, President McCormick, Dean Burgess, head of the College of Agriculture, and Professor Stanley, head of the Animal Husbandry Department, all of the University of Arizona, were contacted by Mr. W. L. Gambrell of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission on June 21, 1947, in an attempt to work out a cooperative program for the use of the area which would prevent intra-state conflict in connection with disposal procedure. At that time President McCormick expressed the belief that there was sufficient room for the activities of the University and the Game Department on the area. In response to a question as to the size of the experimental herd needed by the Animal Husbandry Department, Professor Stanley reluctantly suggested a minimum herd size of "about 500 animal units." He was unwilling, however, to place a firm figure on the herd size which might be necessary to secure the results desired. At that time, in the interest of preserving the

range at its existing excellent condition, the Game Department tentatively agreed that if the University would agree to limit the size of the experimental herd to 500 animal units, the Game Department would cooperate fully and join forces with the University in any attempt to secure administration of the area. On this issue the University officials did not commit themselves.

In the meantime a study of the land status involved indicated that since the original withdrawn area of public domain came under an entirely different classification from the recently acquired artillery range that it would probably be disposed of simply by reversion to the Department of the Interior as public domain land. In the event of such reversion the logical disposition of the land by the Department of the Interior would be either designated as Taylor Grazing Land (Bureau of Land Management) to be leased for commercial grazing or the establishment of a National Park or Monument, or National Wildlife area. Following this line of thought and in the absence of any evidence of cooperative spirit from the University, the members of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission unanimously voted on June 30 toward acquisition of the area exclusively by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission by any possible procedure or to solicit the aid of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Secretary of the Interior in having the land devoted to wildlife use by the establishment of a National Wildlife area to be administered by the State of Arizona. Correspondence towards this end was initiated on July 15, 1947.

In the meantime sportsmen, conservationists and others throughout the State had interested themselves aggressively and had requested that the Arizona Game and Fish Commission go "all out" in their attempt to secure the lands and asked support of the Game Department's program by the Governor's office and the Congressional delegation.

On July 15, 1947, the Commission was advised by the War Assets Administration that federal government agencies would have first priority in the acquisition of the real property involved, upon request. It was known at that time that the U. S. Forest Service had expressed a desire to acquire the old Fort area as a logical addition to the immediately adjacent Coronado National Forest. In view of these developments the possibility of state acquisition through the War Assets Administration disposition appeared to be weakened. On July 18, the Commission was advised by the Forest Service that their information indicated that they would be unable to procure the land since their information indicated that the land withdrawal from public domain would naturally revert to the Bureau of Land Management. This news strengthened the belief that unless new authorization was provided by additional legislation, there was little possibility that the State could procure the area through the medium of the War Assets Administration.

On July 21, 1947, the Game Department wrote Albert M. Day, Director of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, re-stating their request for support in acquiring title to the land by any possible means and in the event that such acquisition proved impossible that the area be withdrawn as a National Wildlife Refuge to be administered by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission. On July 30, Arizona's Congressional delegation was again contacted and

fully advised of the position of the Game Department in the matter and they were again requested to lend their support to the withdrawal of the area for a game range in the event that other acquisition could not be accomplished.

On July 31 the Game Department was advised by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service of their support to the request with reference to Fort Huachuca

On August 4, upon request of Governor Osborn, a meeting was held in his office and participated in by Game Department officials, University officials, representatives of the cities of Bisbee and Tombstone, the State Surplus Property Purchasing Agent and a representative of the Arizona Cattlegrowers Association, the latter being Stewart Krentz of Douglas. At this meeting the desires of both the Game Department and the University were fully aired. The University maintained that it needed and could use all of the grazing range and they showed no indication of any desire for a compromise. The attitude of the Game Department was again announced as being entirely willing to work out cooperative plans for the use of the area. Mr. Krentz, representing the Cattlegrowers Association, in answer to a direct question by Mr. Reid, expressed the belief that there is ample room for both activities and that a maximum livestock herd of 500 animal units should suffice. Press releases notwithstanding, the only agreement reached in that meeting was that the Game Department and University continue to confer in an attempt to iron out differences and achieve a cooperative plan for use of the range. In short, this meant that the Game Department continue to request that the University agree to limit the size of its experimental herd to approximately 500 animal units.

On August 28, the Game Department wrote to the Secretary of the Interior expressing the belief that the originally withdrawn area might revert to his department and requested his confirmation of this as well as an indication of his attitude toward the establishment of a National Wildlife Refuge on the area. On the same date a letter went forward to the Chief of Engineers, U. S. Army, also requesting confirmation that the subject area would in all probability be returned to the Department of the Interior.

Under date of October 8, a response was finally received from the Chief of Engineers stating that in all probability the War Assets Administration laws and regulations would not apply to the area in question but that it would be returned to the Department of the Interior.

On November 13 a meeting was held in the office of the President of the University at Tucson. Participating were University officials, cattlemen, Commissioner Beach and Messrs. Reid and Gambrell of the Game Department. At this meeting the desires of both organizations were again restated and discussed and in spite of an offer of Mr. Reid to limit the buffalo herd to 200 animals the attitude of the University remained unchanged. Professor Stanley insisted that unless his proposed plans, which anticipated utilization of all range grasses on the area, were accepted he did not care to accept the responsibility for the success and operation of his proposed experimental unit.

Again on November 17, Director Reid met with President McCormick in a final and vain attempt to arrive at a satisfactory division of the range lands of Fort Huachuca prior to the submission of Professor Stanley's program to the Board of Regents who were scheduled to meet on November 22.

The University again failed to compromise. On November 19, Governor Osborn wrote to President McCormick taking exception to the University objection to having buffalo use any part of the range and he asked for a more satisfactory reason for the objection.

On November 22, the Board of Regents of the University of Arizona in regular meeting approved and endorsed the plan of Professor Stanley for utilization by the University of the entire area.

Upon receipt of information of the action and decision of the Board of Regents, Director Reid wrote Governor Osborn (copy attached) expressing his extreme regret that the University had remained adamant. Director Reid indicated to the Governor that it was still his desire that some equitable program be worked out through the offices of the Governor whereby any request by the State of Arizona to the disposing agency for the range-lands of Fort Huachuca would present a unified front.

Upon a number of occasions, in discussion relative to Fort Huachuca, livestock men have expressed to Director Reid that in their opinion the University should not require a herd of more than 350-500 animal units for its purpose. Director Reid has repeatedly offered to meet at any time and at any place with representatives of the Cattlegrowers Association and the University in a continued attempt to work out an equitable solution to any differences.

It should be understood that the Arizona Game and Fish Commission is in a financial position to develop such of the Fort Huachuca area as they may acquire for wildlife production and public recreational purposes.

It is still the firm opinion of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission that there is ample room on the Fort Huachuca area for the Arizona National Guard, an experimental livestock herd of sufficient size as to constitute an economic unit and for wildlife research and production and public recreation with no infringement by the legitimate operation of these programs one upon the other.