



# Land Exchange Update

Western Land Exchange Project  
Seattle, Washington

Research, Advocacy, and Outreach  
for Land Exchange Policy Reform

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## GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE SLAMS LAND TRADES

On July 12, 2000, the General Accounting Office released a report sharply criticizing the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management's land exchange programs, following a yearlong audit conducted by the congressional watchdog agency at the request of Congressman George Miller (D-CA).

From April 1999 to April 2000, General Accounting Office auditors examined a total of 51 land exchanges—25 by the Forest Service and 26 by the Bureau—and highlighted results pertaining to 15 of these projects. Exchanges examined in detail were located in Utah, Nevada, California, Idaho, Colorado, Montana, and Washington. Some exchanges, including several in Nevada, had been looked at in previous government audits.

The report confirmed two major problems found in past audits: (1) faulty appraisals for exchange lands—with public lands being undervalued and/or private lands overvalued—resulting in multimillion-dollar losses to taxpayers and (2) the implementation of land trades of questionable public benefit.

This was the eleventh report in four years to expose the programs' failings, following several audits by the inspectors general (IGs) of the Interior and the Agriculture departments. (The twelfth, a report on the Forest Service's Zephyr Cove land trade near Lake Tahoe, was released just one week after the GAO's audit).

In its conclusions and recommendations, however, the GAO went far beyond past studies, stating that there are *inherent problems* with land trades that may not be addressable through reforms, and suggesting that Congress consider discontinuing the land management agencies' exchange programs.

In letters to Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt and Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman, Congressman Miller requested a moratorium on land exchanges until the agencies under their purview can prove that sufficient controls are in place to protect the public interest. Both agencies declined to halt their programs.

The Western Land Exchange Project concurred with the GAO's dire findings, and with Miller's call for a moratorium. We disagreed, however, with the GAO recommendation that the agencies' land exchange authority be permanently eliminated, fearing this would result in limiting that authority to the U.S. Congress, whose track record on land trades is far worse even than that of the agencies.

In a July 27 letter to the four major presidential candidates, the Western Land Exchange Project and 127 other citizen groups from across the country called on them to support a land trade moratorium, push for further audits, and pledge to veto any piece of legislation that would authorize or effect the exchange of federal land. Green Party candidate Ralph Nader was the only respondent, issuing a press release on the

need for a moratorium, a letter to his fellow candidates, and a letter to the 127 groups.

The Western Land Exchange Project has recommended that policy makers take the following steps:

- ◆ A complete moratorium on the trade of federal lands, including by congressional action, pending real reform.
- ◆ A commitment by Congress to full appropriation of the Land & Water Conservation Fund for land acquisition, effectively eliminating the need for trades.
- ◆ New audits to determine whether and how the land exchange programs can be reformed to protect public lands and citizens' interests. Past audits have focused on individual trades, eluding the question of whether the systemic ills are curable.
- ◆ Audits focusing specifically on third party facilitated exchanges to assess whether the participation of land exchange brokers should be severely restricted or altogether discontinued.

- ◆ An audit by the General Accounting Office to evaluate congressional exchanges, including special provisions that benefit private parties and the evasion of environmental laws.

In October, the Forest Service issued a 12-page report on the actions it is taking to address the problems, while the Interior Department has only cursorily responded. The GAO has thus far declined to conduct an audit of congressional trades, but the Western Land Exchange Project will continue to push for an examination of these patently politicized giveaways.

*For more detailed information on the GAO report, "BLM and the Forest Service: Land Exchanges Need to Reflect Appropriate Value and Serve the Public Interest" (GAO/RCED-00-73), see the News and Press Room pages of our website at [www.westlx.org](http://www.westlx.org). You can also download recent reports by the GAO and Inspectors General of USDA and Interior from their respective websites at: <http://www.gao.gov/reports.htm> <http://www.usda.gov/oig/auditrpt/auditrpt.htm> <http://www.oig.doi.gov/reports.html>*

## ***Desert Citizens v. Bisson:*** **Ninth Circuit sides with activists**

Southern California environmentalists obtained a crucial victory in their long fight against an unsavory trade between the BLM and a would-be landfill developer. On November 6, 2000, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of Desert Citizens Against Pollution and their co-plaintiffs, Sierra Club and Desert Protective Counsel.

The years-long challenge to the exchange was led by Sierra Club activist Edie Harmon and litigated by Bill Curtis of Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund.

The decision allows plaintiffs to challenge a land exchange under the "equal value" provision of the Federal Land Policy & Management Act, which requires that federal and non-federal parties to an exchange obtain equal value based on fair-market

appraisals. The Court ruled that plaintiffs had standing to sue under the Administrative Procedures Act (APA), a law that defines the parameters for citizen challenges to agency decisions.

In *Desert Citizens v. Bisson*, land exchange opponents sued the BLM over a planned land trade between the agency and Gold Fields Mining Corporation. The BLM's decision to make the exchange rested on, among other things, spurious appraisals for the federal land that employed a "highest and best use" that grossly undervalued the federal land.

The land to be traded would be used for the Mesquite Regional Landfill in Imperial County, California. Under the proposal, 1,750 acres of BLM lands would be traded for 2,640 private acres in Imperial and Riverside Counties. The exchange would allow the development and operation of a privately

You can read the Ninth Circuit's decision in *Desert Citizens* by visiting the Court's website at:

<http://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/ca9/newopinions.nsf>

and searching for the November 6, 2000 ruling.

owned and operated municipal solid waste landfill east of the Imperial Sand Dunes and south of the Chocolate Mountain Gunnery Range.

Proponents intended to import to the site 600 million tons of garbage from Los Angeles over the next 100 years. The federal lands to be traded would host operations and maintenance facilities, the terminus of a new rail spur, an "intermodal" facility where garbage would be unloaded from rail cars, and a portion of the landfill itself. Federal regulations prohibit the siting of new landfills on federal lands; without the land exchange the project would not be feasible.

Exchange proponents had already applied for permits for the landfill two years before the appraisals were completed, yet the appraisals assigned a highest and best use of "open space" and "mine support" to the federal land. This resulted in land values of \$350 per acre, in contrast to, for example, a comparable sale in the area that valued *landfill* acreage at \$46,000 per acre.

In 1997, the Federal District Court in San Diego ruled that the plaintiffs lacked standing to sue, stating they did not meet the requirements under the Administrative Procedures Act that would distinguish their interests from those of other taxpayers. The day after the lower court's ruling, the BLM and Gold Fields transferred deeds to the lands.

On November 6, 2000, however, the Ninth Circuit ruled that *Desert Citizens et al.* had

indeed met the standards to sue and the court has enjoined activities on the exchange lands pending further court action.

The Mesquite site is one of three huge landfills proposed in the Southern California Desert, which also include the Eagle Mountain Landfill near Joshua Tree National Park and RailCycle in San Bernardino County.

Beginning in the early 1990s, citizens near the Eagle Mountain site have waged a battle against the land exchange near Joshua Tree that would facilitate development of another mega-dump. Joining local organic farmers Donna and Larry Charpied, the Desert Protection Society and the Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice have recently filed another in a long series of legal challenges to the land trade. The *Desert Citizens* decision may aid them in stopping this astonishingly bad project.

*Desert Citizens* is a true watershed case in land exchange litigation, empowering citizens to challenge federal land trades on one of the central issues at play in these projects—the scandalous undervaluing of federal lands coveted by private interests. We owe thanks to Edie Harmon, the Charpieds, and dozens of stubborn activists who are leading this fight.✴

*Read more about the Eagle Mountain project by visiting the CCAEJ website at [http://www.ccaej.org/projects/desert\\_protection/desertprot.html](http://www.ccaej.org/projects/desert_protection/desertprot.html). For more on the Mesquite Landfill, go to <http://www.sierraclub.org/chapters/sandiego/landfill.html>*

## Forest Service issues court-ordered analysis of Huckleberry Land Exchange

The Forest Service has released its latest environmental impact statement for the Huckleberry Land Exchange between the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest and the Weyerhaeuser Company.

The "draft supplemental" EIS is the result of a landmark decision by the Ninth Circuit Court of appeals in *Muckleshoot Indian Tribe v. U.S. Forest Service*. After losing on their challenge to the exchange in Federal District Court, the Muckleshoot Tribe, Pilchuck Audubon Society, and Huckleberry Mountain Protection Society won on appeal. The Ninth Circuit panel ordered the Forest Service to

issue a new environmental analysis with a wider range of alternatives for the proposal; a credible analysis of the environmental impacts of trading federal land to the timber company; and protection for the Huckleberry Divide Trail, a still-visible travel route of the Muckleshoots' ancestors.

The supplemental EIS has four new alternatives, including a smaller land exchange with protections for the Huckleberry Trail (the agency's preferred alternative); a deed-restriction alternative that would require that Weyerhaeuser manage land it receives under national forest standards; an alternative for outright purchase of Weyerhaeuser

lands by the US government; and yet another smaller exchange.

In our comments on the EIS, we urged the Forest Service to adopt the full-purchase alternative, entailing *no trade* of federal lands.



Huckleberry Mountain old growth traded to Weyerhaeuser Company.

Photo: Delmis Sonneson

We remain opposed to the swap, due to the devastating consequences of trading public lands in the Green River watershed and on Huckleberry Mountain.

Serious questions linger as to the propriety of the land and timber appraisals, which by law must yield equal value to the public and the company.

In an investigative series published in September-October 1998, the *Seattle Times* exposed flaws in the appraisal process for the exchange that resulted in a multimillion-dollar break for Weyerhaeuser. Moreover, the 1996 appraisal has far outlived the legal “shelf-life” of one year allowed under federal land exchange regulations. The Western Land Exchange Project has urged the Forest Service to conduct a new appraisal.

The Huckleberry Land Exchange was the impetus for the founding of the Western Land Exchange Project. Four years and hundreds of exchanges later, the exchange still embodies the problems that riddle the land-trade programs. The Forest Service is expected to issue its “supplemental final” EIS and Record of Decision in February.

*More information on the EIS and our response is available on the News page of our website, [www.westlx.org](http://www.westlx.org).*

## **WLXP wins Freedom of Information Act lawsuit; Forest Service opening appraisals to public scrutiny**

A July 2000 decision by Federal District Judge Thomas Zilly has affirmed the public’s right of access to appraisal information for Forest Service land exchanges. The decision culminated a three-year fight by the Western Land Exchange Project to obtain land value data on the Nicholson #5 land exchange in the Boise National Forest. The Forest Service had withheld information on the non-federal land and timber values involved in the trade, citing the private proponents’ right to confidentiality. Judge Zilly ordered the Forest Service to release all of the documents formerly denied us.

Meanwhile, the Forest Service had begun to see the writing on the wall and was formulating new policies for the release of appraisal data in the face of heightening controversy over this issue. In June 2000, Forest Service Lands Director Jack Craven issued a directive to field offices that will open up the files on land values.

The directive states that upon signing the initial agreement to pursue an exchange, the private proponent must agree to the release of this information at the discretion of the Forest Service, essentially freeing the agency from any obligation to shield the private party.

The new policy also says that the agency will make appraisal information available to the public upon the issuance of a draft environmental analysis.

In the past, appraisal information for Forest Service exchanges was not made public until the trade had been completed—barring citizens from examining the fine print in

deals involving our own public lands and closing off one of the most error-prone areas of the land exchange programs.

The Bureau of Land Management—usually several steps behind the Forest Service—has had a more

**Now as through this world I ramble  
I see lots of funny men  
Some will rob you with a six gm  
And some with a fountain pen.**

***Woody Guthrie, Ballad of Pretty Boy Floyd***

liberal policy on appraisal release, giving the public access to records for 45 days prior to the finalization of an exchange.

The Park Service and Fish & Wildlife Service have yet to be tested on this issue, and we will be

looking for opportunities to lead all of the Interior agencies to a more enlightened stance.

Ideally, the potential exposure of malfeasance will inspire appraisers and agency reviewers to do a better job on land valuation and keep the public interest at the center of the appraisal process.

## Northern Arizonans ready to fight Yavapai bill

Residents of northern Arizona are preparing to stop a legislated land exchange involving private lands within the Prescott National Forest (PNF) and public lands near the towns Williams, Camp Verde, Cottonwood, Clarkdale, and Flagstaff—possibly amounting to as much as 100,000 acres in total.

The Yavapai Land Exchange, first proposed as an administrative action by the Forest Service, is now being taken into the Congressional arena, where the proponents hope to bypass public comment and environmental analysis to get swift passage of the project.

The trade is being proposed by Fred Ruskin, who owns private “checkerboard” lands within the PNF, and pushed by lobbyist Andy Wiessner, a longtime land exchange facilitator. Ruskin and his Yavapai Ranch Limited Partnership are threatening development of the forest inholdings if they cannot trade the lands for developable parcels near the towns.

Many individual citizens and some local governments are rallying to oppose the legislation; some say that they are not necessarily opposed to an exchange, but demand that it be done administratively so that citizens are given input.

David Leibforth, vice-mayor of Clarkdale, is adamantly opposed to bypassing the the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). “Privatizing public lands without the full NEPA process makes no sense,” says Leibforth. He and others have vowed to keep the public in the picture.

None dispute the desirability of acquiring Ruskin’s lands within the Prescott National Forest, but there

is deep concern about some land that would be privatized and developed after it is traded to Ruskin. Northern Arizona faces a severe water-supply problem as a result of uncontrolled development and many towns are attempting to take measures to confront unsustainable growth.

Enactment through Congress is becoming a popular method by which private landowners can make quick-and-dirty trades that suspend environmental analysis, bar citizen challenges, and often gain special provisions favoring their interests.

Wiessner, a founder of the Western Land Group (WLG) in Colorado, has facilitated numerous land trades. He frequently defends the land exchange programs and speaks against the “cumbersome” NEPA process that gives citizens the right to participate in and/or challenge these decisions.

In addition to having engineered dozens of trades, WLG wrote the 1988 Federal Land Exchange Facilitation Act, which created negotiation and “bargaining” mechanisms to resolve disputes appraisals used in land exchanges. Audits by government watchdog agencies have shown that this often results in huge losses to the public.

The bill for the Yavapai exchange has yet to be introduced, but is expected to advance early in the 107th Congress. The Western Land Exchange Project will continue to work with local citizens and members of Congress to block the Yavapai legislation and keep the proposal in the public arena, where it belongs. 🌲

# STEENS MOUNTAIN BILL BUYS RANCHERS OUT

## 5-TO-1 SWAP, 5 MILLION DOLLARS, AND A WORRISOME PRECEDENT

For years, activists have been seeking protection for Steens Mountain in southeast Oregon, a 9,000 foot high fault-block mountain treasured for its scenic and recreational value. Lands on the mountain are a mix of Bureau of Land Management holdings and private ranches, and the impacts of grazing have taken their toll on the landscape.

In the spring of 2000, Interior Secretary Babbitt expressed interest in establishing a national monument on the Steens, and in the face of protests by local ranchers, challenged those with an interest in the lands to come up with an alternative that would afford some protection to the area.

Negotiations ensued between environmentalists, Oregon Rep. Greg Walden, and five Steens ranchers whose lands were targeted for protection. Over a period of several months, the parties developed a bill to create a Steens Mountain "Cooperative Management and Protection Area" that would include 100,000 acres of "cow-free wilderness" and set up a complex management scheme for the mountain.

Support for the legislation was led by the Oregon Natural Desert Association, Oregon Trout, and the Sierra Club.

The proposal exemplified a host of land use schemes that arose under the Clinton-Gore administration, with land protection made more palatable through "cooperation" with anti-environmental interests. The bill sought both to protect the Steens and, as Walden put it, "preserve the ranching way of life."

As the proposal evolved, the Western Land Exchange Project became increasingly concerned about some elements of the bill, including provisions for vastly lopsided land exchanges that would bring private ranches into public ownership and trade lower-elevation BLM lands to the ranchers.

For weeks, negotiations over the bill continued, yet no environmental analysis had been done and details were difficult to obtain on the exact lands to be traded. We were particularly alarmed by three elements of the proposal:

- ◆ land exchanges that would yield the ranchers more than seven times the acreage the government would receive and result in a net loss of 75,000 acres of public land;
- ◆ the addition to the appraisal of an "economic impact analysis" that treated the acquisition of the private lands through trade as a condemnation, despite the voluntary nature of the exchanges. This added considerable value to the private lands and departed from federal appraisal standards.
- ◆ cash payments proposed to make the ranchers "economically whole" in moving their operations to different land;
- ◆ the desire of proponents to sidestep any environmental analysis or public involvement process for the land trades.

While we supported acquisition of the ranches and the suspension of grazing on the Steens, WLXP opposed the bill on the basis of these provisions.

In letters to Secretary Babbitt and members of Congress, we protested the special considerations for the Steens ranchers, fearing that the bill would create a template for future buyouts in the Steens area and elsewhere.

(About 100,000 acres of private holdings remain on Steens Mountain, and the legislation authorizes future acquisitions through exchange or purchase).

Unfortunately, WLXP was alone in opposing the bill, and the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000 passed both Houses and was signed by the president in late October.

The final bill traded 104,000 acres of public land for 18,000 acres of private holdings. This was a narrower ratio than originally proposed, but resulted in an 86,000 acre net loss of federal land. Cash payments to the ranchers totaled \$5 million.

The BLM is also responsible for the cost of constructing fences and water developments on some of the ranchers' new lands. 🌿

# PROJECT UPDATE

**Erik Ryberg**

Keeping on top of every federal land exchange in eleven western states is a tough job—but sometimes it's easy compared to the task of prying the environmental documents out of the agencies proposing these projects.

A significant portion of my time at WLXP is spent making sure we stay on the appropriate mailing lists and haranguing the agencies to send us the environmental assessments and environmental impact statements they prepare. The BLM in particular frequently displays a lack of cooperative spirit—the agency has a rather whimsical approach to keeping the public informed, and a protest we recently filed on a land trade in northern California hit a snag when the BLM baldly refused to accept delivery.

Once the documents arrive, I review them under a few criteria to determine if they can go into our files unchallenged. Generally, if an exchange is less than a half square mile in size and does not involve old growth, cultural resources, wetlands, or some other important biological or geographic feature—and doesn't carry a suspicious odor—it goes into the files until somebody calls and gives us a reason to challenge it. If we know of activists in the vicinity of the exchange, we alert them to the project.

For those projects that don't pass the test, I file comments with the agency. This alone can delay an exchange quite a while, depending how inclined the bureaucrats in charge are to being thrown into helpless disarray.

On a fairly regular basis, a final decision comes along that must be appealed. I've observed a strong correlation between projects we comment on and projects we appeal. Our concerns are rarely if ever addressed by the agencies, which leaves us with the options of (a) settling for being ignored or (b) appealing the project and forcing the agency to review the problems we have with the project. Generally, I find myself recommending we go with (b).

We currently have four projects under appeal: the **Cane Springs** and **Ray Mine** land trades in Arizona, the **L-Bar Land Exchange** in New Mexico

(see story in this issue), and the **Beaver/Butter 'n' Eggs Cleanup** in Idaho. (Please direct inquiries regarding the name of the latter to the Clearwater NF; we cannot offer insight into the nomenclature.)

In the curious **Cane Springs** trade near Kingman, Arizona, the BLM would acquire checkerboards surrounded by state land—contrary to the policy of consolidating land ownership that is behind so many land trades. The trade offers developers valuable land along the interstate. One of the proponents has offered to fly us down to Arizona to discuss our concerns, an indication of the high stakes involved. (In lieu of making the trip, we are appealing).

The **Ray Mine** exchange is a nasty piece of work that would allow ASARCO to expand a huge open pit copper mine in central Arizona. Our protest, filed jointly with the Center for Biological Diversity and the Grand Canyon Chapter of the Sierra Club, awaits a decision by the BLM.

The **Beaver etc.** exchange is an exceptionally sweet deal for those members of the public who are owners of the Potlatch Timber Company. They will be making off with an old-growth cedar forest, a wetland, a cultural resource site, and a bunch of acres of unlogged forest. We have appealed this exchange on behalf of all of us who are not presently owners of Potlatch Timber.

Comments filed on the **Stimson** (formerly **Crown Pacific**) **Land Exchange** in Idaho helped bring some favorable changes to that project, but we remain skeptical. The swap was originally proposed by Crown Pacific, and in response to our request that the agency consider *purchasing* the land rather than trading for it, the Forest Service stated unequivocally that Crown was not willing to sell. A few weeks later, Crown sold the land to Stimson Timber.

The most frightening part of my job is land exchanges.

Pat Shea, Director, Bureau of Land Management 1997-98

## WLXP joins with hunters' coalition to oppose NM swap

A land exchange on the Cibola National Forest north of Albuquerque has stirred up an astonishing amount of local opposition. In the L-Bar Exchange, the Forest Service has proposed to trade an 11,000 acre block of public land that includes a unique oak savanna ecosystem. This savanna offers unusually good elk habitat and is cherished by local hunters.

But the land is in checkerboard ownership, and the owner of the private sections, L-Bar Ranch, has loudly complained of trespass on his lands during hunting season. To resolve this, the Forest Service has proposed a trade of public lands.

Hunter Larry Dwyer and WLXP appealed the decision to complete the exchange, citing several failures in the environmental analysis, privatization of the unique oak savanna, and abundant evidence that the trade caters strictly to the interests of the L-Bar Ranch. We suggested several alternatives that could lessen the trade's impact, but the Forest Service has said L-Bar wishes to open a private hunting preserve on the lands they would receive and will not accept any proposal that would give the ranch less than the entire oak savanna area.

Hunters are also concerned because the exchange would completely block public access to the Marquez Wildlife Area, run by the state and open to public hunting. After the exchange, access to the Wildlife Area would be controlled by the L-Bar Ranch.

Our appeal, as usual, was denied—but local hunters have continued organizing, and a recent gathering against the exchange brought in nearly 200 people. WLXP and local opponents are contemplating further action to block the proposal.

*Our gratitude to the following charitable foundations for their support of the Western Land Exchange Project:*

*Maki, Wilburforce, Flintridge, Burning, Weeden, New-Land, Deer Creek, Horizons, and Ben & Jerry's.*

## Voters sink Grand Canyon development hooked to land trade

On November 7, voters in Arizona's Coconino County resoundingly rejected Proposition 400, which would have rezoned public land near the Grand Canyon to allow intensive commercial development. The Canyon Forest Village (CFV) project rested on both a county rezoning and a federal land exchange that would have given the developers 272 acres of land from the Kaibab National Forest. The proposition went down by a margin of 64 percent despite CFV's \$1 million campaign to win voter approval.

The land exchange to facilitate the development has been approved by the Forest Service, but is conditioned on the rezoning. To make matters worse for the Forest Service and the developer, many of those who led the fight against Proposition 400 filed suit last year in federal court to reverse the land exchange.

CFV developer Tom DiPaolo says he is not giving up and may come back with a revised project. But Clarinda Vail, one of CFV's leading opponents, told the *Arizona Daily Sun*, "I've lived in Coconino County all my life and I'm not sure...voters have ever sent a clearer message on a local issue."

*See the News page of our website for more on the CFV boondoggle.*

## THANKS TO OUR MEMBERS AND DONORS

Tom and Jackie Andrewjeski, Suzanne Artemieff, Charles M. Bagley, Lynne Bama, Vernon Bates, James Bicknell, Elizabeth Bottero, Dana Brooks, Carolyn Caine, Homer & Meg Campbell, Linda T. Campbell, David Cason, John Craighead, Julian & Alice Dewell, Mark Drake, Beth Fries and Darrel Van Pelt, Bruce Gaynor, Leslie Glustrom, Harrison Grathwohl, Howard Grooters, Charles Hancock, Ann Harvey, Robert Haskins, Erin Havrilesky, Julia Heiman, George Hermach, Buell & Donna Hollister, Dave & Corey Jacobs, Albert Kaufman, Fayette Krause, Pam Lichtman, Craig Lorch, Sarah Luthens, Victor Magistrale, Louise Mariana, Ann McConnell, Kyme McGaw, Laurene McLane, Beth Menig, Cathryn Miller, Charlie Ogle, Cal Osborn, John Osborn & Rachael Paschal Osborn, Kathryn & Howard Paine, Giancarlo Panagia, Debra Patla and Merlin Hare, Chuck Pezeshki, Carol Porto, Jock Pribnow, Tom Pringle, Robert Riddle, Leslie Ann Rose, Michael Rosentreter, Howard Rundquist, Rebecca Rundquist, David Shelton, Richard Slagle, Jeri Smith-Fornara, Don Steuter, Richard Strickland, Michael Temcov, the Van Doornincks, Joanne Vinton, David & Susan Ward, D.W. Wiegand, and Don & Trudy Zimmerman.

We warmly welcome **Charles Hancock** to the Western Land Exchange Project Advisory Board. Charles worked for the Bureau of Land management for 36 years before retiring in 1989. For his last 15 years with the agency, Charles was Chief Appraiser for the Nevada state BLM office. Since leaving BLM, he has been active in local and statewide public land issues in Nevada. He has been a vocal critic of current federal land exchange policy and appraisal procedures. His work has led to investigations of Nevada land trades by the Department of Interior and Department of Agriculture inspectors general. He and his wife Catherine reside in Reno.

Special thanks to our summer intern, **Chris Krupp**, for his excellent analysis of land exchange case law. Chris, a third-year law student at the University of Washington, spent his summer writing a history of land exchange-related cases that will serve as a critical tool for activists and attorneys. Chris also provided on-the-spot analysis and input on legislative and regulatory matters. He won our admiration with his commitment and his principled approach. Pending its publication, the case digest is available in draft form from the Western Land Exchange Project.

#### **KEEP US POSTED**

Try as we may, we don't always learn of land trades in a timely manner. If you hear of a proposal in your area, please let us know through email or a phone call. We're here to help!

#### **WATCH OUR WEBSITE**

The Western Land Exchange Project continues to gain widespread media interest in the land exchange issue. Recent local, regional, and national coverage has included articles in the *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Salt Lake Tribune*, *Deseret News*, *Arizona Republic*, *Seattle Times* and *Post-Intelligencer*, *Las Vegas Review Journal* and *Sun*, *High Country News*, and *Wild Earth*. Please visit our web page at **www.westlx.org** for alerts, news articles, and analysis of land trade proposals. News articles can be found on our Press Room page.

#### **FILL OUR NEWS ARCHIVE**

We have a voluminous archive of news stories on land trades and related matters, but it's never complete. If you see a news article on our issue, please mail us a hard copy.

**Land Exchange Update** is published by the Western Land Exchange Project, a non-profit charitable organization conducting research, outreach, and advocacy for the reform of federal land exchange policy.

#### Western Land Exchange Project

P.O. Box 95545  
Seattle, WA 98145-2545  
phone 206.325.3503; fax 206.325.3515  
www.westlx.org

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#### Staff:

Janine Blaeloch, Director, blaeloch@westlx.org  
Stefanie Sekich, Program Coordinator, sekich@westlx.org  
Erik Ryberg, Policy Analyst, ryberg@westlx.org

### **Farewell to a fighter for the earth**

We are saddened by the loss of our good friend Paul Fritz, a humorous, uncompromising, outspoken, and energetic defender of public lands. Paul was former Superintendent of the Craters of the Moon National Monument near Arco, Idaho and had worked for many years as a landscape architect for the Park Service. In his retirement, he served on the boards of many environmental groups and was a staunch supporter of grassroots efforts. Paul knew everyone, had an opinion on everything, and was a good man to talk to when the chips were down. We will miss his phone calls, scrawled communiqués, and unquenchable spirit.



# **We're scrappy...and we get the job done**

Please help support our work for public lands by completing this form and returning it with your tax-deductible membership/donation to the **Western Land Exchange Project.**

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PO Box 95545  
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