

EXPLANATORY TOWNSHIP

STATUS OF PUBLIC DOMAIN
LAND AND MINERAL TITLES

Space for title of plat,
whether Master Title or Use

→ MT PLAT

[illegible]

This space frequently
used and each entry
is self-explanatory

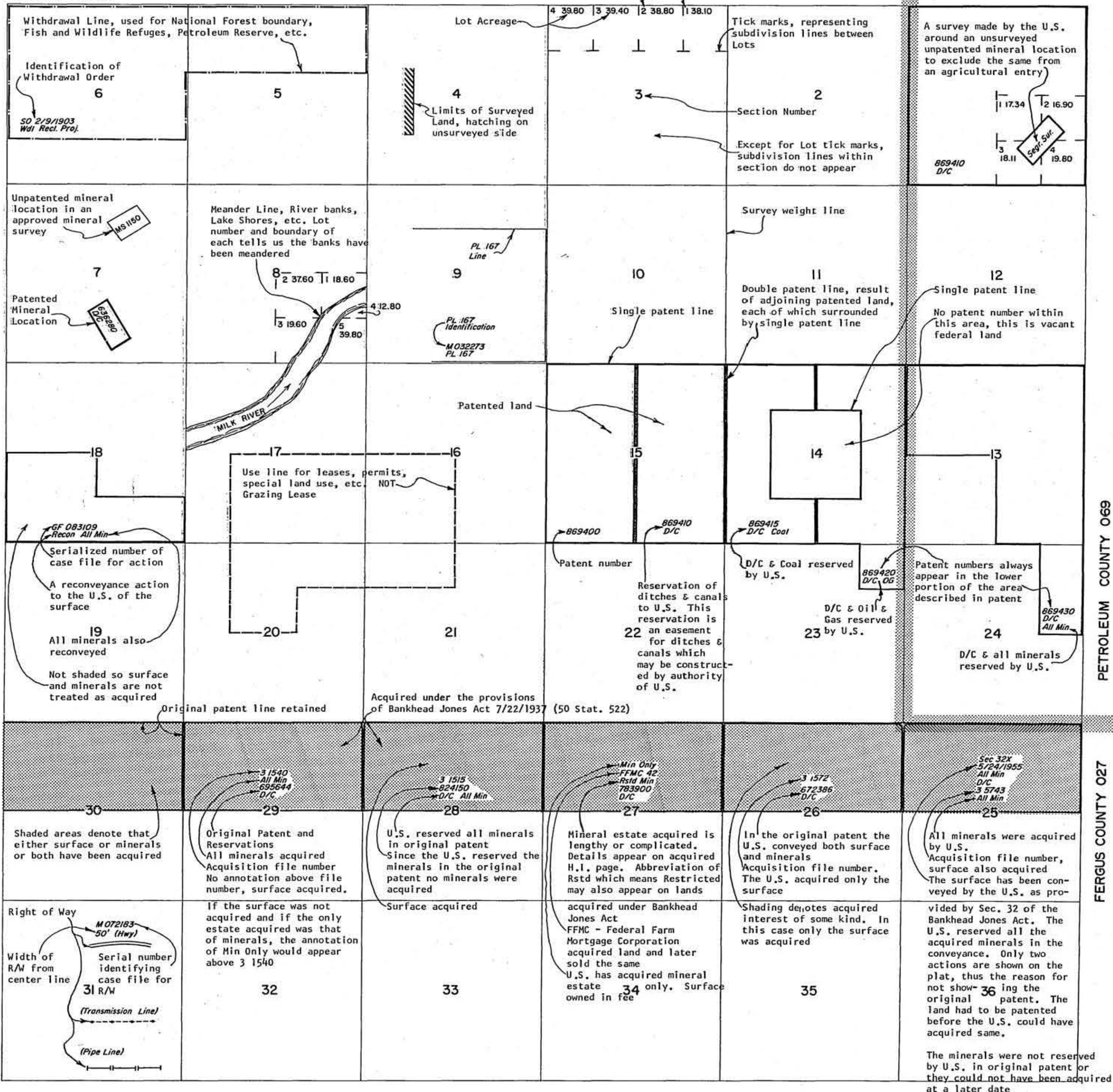
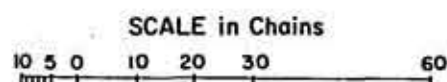
FOR ORDERS EFFECTING DISPOSAL OR USE OF
UNIDENTIFIED LANDS REFER TO INDEX OF
MISCELLANEOUS DOCUMENTS.

| | |
|------------|------------|
| CURRENT TO | CURRENT TO |
| | |
| | |

USE PLATS: PHO MIN COAL SOD OG
Note here the existence of Use

All copies for status purpose and
furnished public are date stamped

T. 19 N.
R. 20 E.



LEGEND OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE STATUS RECORDS

| | | | |
|--|--------------|--|---------------|
| Acquired | Acq | Identification, identity | Ident |
| Act of Congress | Act of Cong | Illustration | Illus |
| Additional homestead entry | AHE | Inclusion, inclusive | Incl |
| Additional stockraising homestead entry | ASRHE | Indemnity list | IL |
| Adjusted homestead entry | ADHE | Indemnity selection | IS |
| Administrative site | Adm S | Indian allotment | IA |
| Agriculture, agricultural | Agri | Indian fee | Ind Fee |
| Agriculture Experiment Station | Agri Exp Sta | Indian homestead trust patent | Ind Hd Tr Pat |
| Air Navigation Site | ANS | Indian reservation | Ind Res |
| Airport | AP | Indian trust | Ind Tr |
| All minerals | All Min | Interim conveyance | IC |
| Allotment | Allot | Interior Decisions | ID |
| Amendment | Amnt | Interior Land Decisions | ILD |
| Appendix | App | Interpretation | IT |
| Application | Appl | Isolated tract | Isot |
| Appropriation, appropriate, appropriated | Approp | | |
| Approved | Apprd | | |
| Area Administrator Order (a) | Area Adm O | Jurisdiction | Juris |
| Asphalt | Asph | | |
| Assignment, assign, assigned | Assign | Known coal leasing area | KCLA |
| Atomic Energy Commission | AEC | Known geologic structure | KGS |
| Authorization | Auth | Known geothermal resource area | KGRA |
| Aviation lease | Av Lease | Known leasing area | KLA |
| | | Known recoverable coal resource area | KRCRA |
| Balance | Bal | Land Office | LO |
| Bentonite | Ben | Land utilization | LU |
| Black Hills Meridian | Blk H Mer | Latitude | Lat |
| Block | Blk | Lease | Lea |
| Boundary, boundaries | Bdry, Bdrys | Leasable | Leas |
| Bureau of Indian Affairs | BIA | Letter | Ltr |
| Bureau of Land Management | BLM | Licenses | Lic |
| Bureau of Land Management Order | BLM O | Lien selection | LS |
| Bureau of Reclamation | BR | Location, locatable | Loc |
| | | Longitude | Long |
| Cadastral | Cad | Management | Mgmt |
| Cancellation, cancelled | Canc | Master Title Plat | MTP |
| Cash certificate | Cash Cert | Material site | Mat S |
| Cash entry | Cash Ent | Meridian | Mer |
| Certificate | Cert | Mer and bounds | Mer Bds |
| Chain, chains | Ch, Chs | Military purpose | MLP |
| Circular | Circ | Military reservation | Mil Res |
| Classification | Clas | Millage | Mill S |
| Coal declaratory statement | CDS | Mineral | Min |
| Code of Federal Regulations | CFR | Mineral certificate | MC |
| Color of title | C of T | Mineral location | ML |
| Commissioner of Lands | Com L | Mineral Location and Contest Index | MLCI |
| Communication line | Comm L | Mineral monument | MM |
| Communication site | Comm S | Mineral survey | MS |
| Communication agreement | Comm Agt | Mining Claim Occupancy Act | MCOA or MOA |
| Community pit | Comm P | Miscellaneous | Misc |
| Condemnation | Condemn | Modification | Mod |
| Control Document Index | CDI | Montana | MT |
| Corporation | Corp | Montana Principal Meridian | MPM |
| Corps of Engineers | C of E | Monument | Mon |
| Credit entry | Cre | Mountain | Min |
| Cursive patent | Cur Pat | Multiple use | Multi Use |
| Competitive Oil & Gas Request | Comp OG Req | | |
| Deficiency | Def | National Forest | NF |
| Desert land entry | Des Lnd Ent | National Monument | N Mon |
| Designated, designation | Desig | National Park | NP |
| Determination | Det | National Resource Lands | NRL |
| District Manager | DM | National Wildlife Refuge | NWR |
| District Office | D/O | Nitrate | Nit |
| Ditches and/or for cattle | D/C | Noncompetitive | nc |
| Document | Doc | North | N |
| Donation claim | Doc | North Dakota | ND |
| | | Northeast | NE |
| Easement | Easmt | Northwest | NW |
| East | E | Not open to entry | NOL |
| Effective | Efct | Not open to lease | NOL |
| Elimination, eliminate | Elim | Not open to mining | NOM |
| Enlarged homestead entry | EHE | Oil and gas | OG |
| Enlargement | Enlgrmt | Oil shale | OS |
| Exchange, exchanged | X | Open to entry | OE |
| Exchange survey | ES | Operation | Oper |
| Excluding, excluded | Excl | Order | O |
| Executive Order | EO | Oregon and California (revested lands) | O&C |
| Expire, expired | Ext | Parcel | Par |
| Extended, extension, extend | Ext | Patent | Pat |
| | | Permit | Per |
| Farm unit | Fm U | Personnel, Division of | PER |
| Farmers Home Administration | FHA | Petroleum reserve | Per Res |
| Federal | Fed | Phosphate | Pho |
| Federal Aviation Administration | FAA | Planning, Division of | PL |
| Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation | FFMC | Potassium | Pot |
| Federal Power Act | FPA | Power project | Pwr Proj |
| Federal Power Commission | FPC | Power site | Pwr S |
| Federal Register | FR | Principal meridian | PM |
| Fifth Principal Meridian | 5th P.M. | Private exchange | PX |
| Final certificate | FC | Proclamation | Proc |
| Fish and Wildlife Service | FWS | Project | Proj |
| Flammable materials | Fis | Propose, proposed | Prop |
| Forest exchange | FX | Prospecting permit | Pr Per |
| Forest lieu selection | FLS | Protective withdrawal | Prot Wd |
| Fractional | Frac | Public domain | PD |
| Fractional interest patent | Frac Int Pat | Public Land Order | PLO |
| Free use permit | FUP | Public Law | PL |
| General Land Office | GLO | Public sale | PS |
| Geologic structure | Geol Str | Public use | PU |
| Geothermal | Geo | Public water reserve | PWR |
| Gold | Gd | Purchase | Pur |
| Grazing district | Gr Dist | Quarter | 1/4 |
| Grazing lease | Gr Lease | Quitclaim deed | QCD |
| Grazing license | Gr Lic | | |
| Grazing permit | Gr Per | Railroad | RR |
| | | Railroad indemnity selection | RRIS |
| Hall | 1/2 | Railroad grant | RRG |
| Headquarters site | Hdq S | Railroad lieu selection | RRLS |
| Highway | Hwy | Railway | Ry |
| Historical Index | HI | | |
| Homestead entry | HE | | |
| Homestead entry survey | HES | | |

MAP SYMBOLS FOR LAND STATUS RECORDS

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| WITHDRAWALS | PIPE LINE OR CONDUIT |
| PATENTS | CANAL OR DITCH |
| LEASES | FENCE |
| PL 167 DETERMINATION AREA | ACQUIRED LANDS |
| LIMITS OF SURVEYED LAND (HATCHING ON UNSURVEYED SIDE) | CEMETERY |
| RAILROAD | HISTORIC RUINS |
| RAILROAD STATIONGROUNDS | RIVER AND ISLAND |
| TELEPHONE LINE | STREAM |
| POWER TRANSMISSION LINE | LAKE AND ISLAND |
| HIGHWAYS, ROADS | RESERVOIR |
| TRAIL | SPRING |
| MATERIAL SITES | WATER WELL |
| RADIO STATION | WATER WELL (WITH TROUGH AND STORAGE) |
| | CORRIDOR (R/W's) |

OFFICE RECORDS

The records in use in the Montana State Office consist of three elements: (1) Ownership, or Master Title Plat; (2) Use Plat; and (3) Historical Index. "Use Plat" is the label assigned to Master Title Plats which also show mineral leases issued by the Bureau of Land Management. This could be Oil and Gas, Coal, Phosphate, etc. Generally, there is a separate plat for each type of mineral lease and, therefore, it is possible to have, in some cases, two or more Use Plats for the same township. The title information on the Use Plat is identical to that on the Master Title Plat, the only difference being that the Use Plat will show leases for a specific mineral, whereas the Master Title Plat does not. Each township may have all three of the above mentioned elements and is complete in every respect — being able to stand by itself in terms of title, use and historical information.

Master Title Plat

The Ownership Plat, or Master Title Plat, as it is commonly called, shows the land which has been patented, the patent numbers, the reservations to the United States as stated in the patent, and the land which is still vacant Federal land — often times referred to as vacant public domain. Withdrawals, rights-of-way, national forests, Indian reservations, wildlife refuges, and other such similar reservations and actions are also shown. Lands which have been patented and then reacquired by the United States are shown on the records and are referred to as acquired lands. Acquired lands are those which left federal ownership by patent and later purchased back, for one reason or another, — land for which actual monies were paid by the United States. Land reacquired to the United States as a result of exchanges are not acquired lands.

The first step in building the Master Title Plat was the making of a basic township plat on a scale of 30 chains to the inch. The basic plat is a constructed copy of the official township survey plat and is as nearly identical as possible. If more than one survey had been made for a township, the basic plat is a composite of all the surveys with the composite survey picture appearing on one page. Although it is either a copy or a composite of the surveys, the Master Title Plat is not to be construed as an official survey plat.

The Master Title Plat conveys title information by various weights and different shapes of lines. Each different weight or kind of line indicates a separate and distinct type of action. Each such action is annotated with an abbreviation which identifies the action or authority for the actions. The Legend of Abbreviations and Symbols sheet shows the various lines used and a meaning of the different abbreviations.

The Explanatory Township, which accompanies this discussion, has been prepared to show most of the types of lines used and the information conveyed by each. For the purpose of illustration, it has been labeled Township 19 North, Range 20 East, Principal Meridian, Montana. The following explanation will further assist the reader in using the Explanatory Township:

The light-weight line surrounding Section 7 is the weight of the survey lines which appear on the basic plat. Section 3 and Section 8 show how lots appear. Note that the subdivision lines separating lots are not full length, only partial; they are called tick marks. These partial subdivision lines are the only survey lines shown within a section. Survey lines for a full 40-acre subdivision in a section are not shown. Section 4 shows how the boundary between surveyed and unsurveyed lands is indicated.

In Sections 5 and 6, there is shown a line which is used to identify Federal withdrawals whenever only a portion of township is under withdrawal. These lines are annotated, as to purpose and effective date, at the lower extremity of the area embraced in the withdrawal. If the entire township is in the withdrawal, such as a national forest or Indian reservation, the withdrawal line is not used. Instead, a notation on the right-hand side of the plat will state that the entire township is affected by the withdrawal.

The annotation in Section 9 is for Public Law 167, the Act of July 23, 1955. This law pertains to administrative jurisdiction by the United States over surface resources on unpatented mining claims. Since it does not affect title, there is no need to give it further attention in discussions concerning title.

In Sections 13, 14, and 15, are annotations pertaining to patents. Note the single patent line between Sections 15 and 16. A patent line is drawn around every piece of ground for the lands described in the patent. When two patented areas join, there is a double-weight patent line, as appears in the middle of Section 15. The patent number always appears in the lower extremity of the area patented. If there is no patent number, the land is vacant public domain. Note the SW 1/4 NE 1/4, SE 1/4 NW 1/4, NE 1/4 SW 1/4, NW 1/4 SE 1/4 of Section 14, which is unpatented federal land.

Since October 21, 1976, a mineral claimant must advise the United States, by filing with the Bureau of Land Management a copy of the location certificate and a map showing the location of the claim. However, if an official mineral survey has not been made for the unpatented location, it does not appear on the title records. Only those included in approved mineral surveys appear, such as MS 1150 in Section 7. The weight of the line for MS 1150 is survey weight. If a patent has been issued describing a claim, the MS number is replaced with the patent number and a patent weight line replaces the survey weight line, such as you see for Patent Number 636280 in Section 7.

Whenever there are any reservations to the United States, a notation will appear below the patent number. If there is no annotation below the patent number, the United States reserved nothing. The patent numbers and reservation annotations appearing for the patented areas outlined in Section 13, 14, 15 and 24 are examples of the various types of reservations which can occur.

The United States occasionally purchases lands which have been previously patented. Such land is referred to as acquired land and, where the State Office has the acquisition information, such acquired lands are shaded as shown in Section 25 through Section 30. The fact that an area is shaded indicates that the United States may have an acquired surface interest or an acquired mineral interest, or both. Exactly what was acquired and is presently owned by the United States may be determined by a reading of the annotations for the land under consideration.

For the most part, land which is shaded will carry annotations such as those appearing in Sections 28 and 29; in both cases the surface is owned by the United States. The United States also owns the minerals in both sections; but those originally retained, as in Section 28, are subject to disposition under one law, and those acquired, as in Section 29, are subject to disposition under a different law. Thus, the records are designed to show both the surface and the mineral estate, plus the nature of the mineral estate.

The annotation in Section 25 tells us the United States does not own the surface, but has an acquired mineral interest; hence the shading. The same is true in Section 27. In Section 26, the shading applies to surface only.

It should be emphasized that the State Office may not have information concerning land which has been acquired by the Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Reclamation, now the Water and Power Resources Service, or any other Federal agency which still exercises jurisdiction over the land. However, with a specific description of the lands in question, the State Office can find the exact status.

The right-of-way symbols appearing in Section 31 should not appear on anything except Bureau of Land Management administered land, except in those cases where the right-of-way was in effect before the land was patented. In such cases, the patent was issued subject to the right-of-way.

Use Plat

As mentioned previously, the records make a provision for a Use Plat on which are shown the uses (grazing leases excepted) which are made of Federal land. The broken lines appearing in Sections 16, 17, 20 and 21 are lines which indicate use such as oil or gas lease, coal licenses or leases, etc. These records do not show grazing leases. This information must be obtained from BLM District Offices or Resource Area Headquarters.

Historical Index

The Historical Index is a chronological narrative of all past and present actions which affect the use of or title to public lands and resources. The Historical Index can be used to check title, but it was not designed for that purpose, nor is it necessary for use in making title determinations. The primary value of the Historical Index is its adaptability for abstract work. This record is maintained in the State Office public room, which is open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., each working day.

Procedure For Using Master Title Plat

As stated in the forepart of this discussion, the records are designed to convey the title story by use of lines and abbreviated annotations for those lines. The guides, listed below, if followed in each case, should help in making the records quite easy to read.

1. Always follow a line around until you come back to the point of beginning. The area within the bounds of the line is the land affected.
2. To help in finding the annotation for a particular line, know what the line stands for. The legend of abbreviations and symbols tells you the information conveyed by the different lines.
3. The annotation for the area circumscribed by a line always appears at the lower extremity of the area involved. In areas of congested title information, it is very common to see the annotation outside of the land area in question. However, this annotation is always arrowed in to the area affected. The legend of abbreviation gives the full wording for an abbreviated annotation.
4. The plats are on a scale of 30 chains to the inch. Whenever the situation exists where this scale is too small to adequately tell the story, a supplemental plat, on a scale of 10 or 15 chains to the inch, is prepared. Normally, never more than 4 sections appear on a supplemental plat. The township plat always says "See Supplemental Plat", if one has been made. Where there is a supplemental plat, the main township plat does not carry any title information for the sections concerned. Such information appears on the supplemental plat only.

The title information appearing on the Master Title Plat was taken from microfilm copies of the documents themselves, and these microfilms are now in the Montana State Office. We can, at any time, furnish a copy of any document which appears on the records. This consists of patents, withdrawal orders, state selection lists, etc. If there are questions concerning the Master Title Plats, if additional information is required, or if copies of the above mentioned documents are needed, we hope you will not hesitate to address an inquiry to: Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 36800, Billings, Montana 59107.