

JOB COMPLETION REPORT
INVESTIGATIONS PROJECTS

State of Montana

Project No. F-10-R-6

Name Classification of Public Lands

Job No. I

Title Appraisal of Public Lands

Period Covered: May 1, 1957 to April 30, 1958

Abstract: In 1957 public land survey was conducted on 147 tracts in Granite, Broadwater, Park and part of Sweetgrass Counties to determine their desirability as fishing access. Of these tracts, 49.7 percent were recommended for withholding from sale. Lack of water due mainly to irrigation and natural drying up was the main reason for rejection.

To date, under this project, 99,000 acres have been requested for retention from sale through the Bureau of Land Management and 152,000 acres through the State Board of Land Commissioners.

Objectives: To appraise the public lands both under lease and not under lease for their value as public access to fishing waters of the state. These appraisals to be presented to the State Board of Land Commissioners and the Bureau of Land Management for such action by them as is appropriate to insure preservation of public access.

Techniques Used: Each tract of public land on or near water is visited and appraisals are made as follows:

- a. Present land use.
- b. The present and potential value in general terms of the body of water for fishing and recreation.
- c. Value of the land as public access to the water.
- d. Present status of access to the water over each public land tract.
- e. Possible conflict of present land use with that proposed for public access.

Appraisal reports and recommendations were written and presented to the State Board of Land Commissioners and the Bureau of Land Management. Close contact was maintained by the project leader with the State Board of Land Commissioners and the Bureau of Land Management that their action on the appraisals and recommendations may be followed.

Findings:

Granite, Broadwater, Park and part of Sweetgrass Counties were completed in the public land survey this year. Public land in 147 tracts was examined in these counties. Seventy-three tracts (49.7 percent) were recommended for retention from sale. Lack of water due mainly to irrigation and drying up naturally was the main reason for rejection.

To date project reports have been sent to the Bureau of Land Management requesting retention from sale of about 99,000 acres and to the State Board of Land Commissioners requesting retention from sale of about 152,000 acres.

A map showing the area included in this project is attached. Shown on the map is the area completed to date and the area yet to be completed.

Several tracts have been purchased this past year to provide access for fishing. More tracts are being investigated for purchase as fishing access by the Montana Fish and Game Department.

Recommendations:

The public land survey provides information to the State Land Board and the Bureau of Land Management on values of public land tracts for fishing and recreation. The Commissioner of State Lands attaches our report of fishery value to the file card of each land tract. By agreement with the Land Board, recommended lands are to be withheld from sale. The Bureau of Land Management keeps record of our recommendations and considers them along with other information they may have on lands for which sale applications have been received. The BLM notifies the Fish and Game Department of all sale applications and where more complete information is needed to support a rejection the information is requested from the Department.

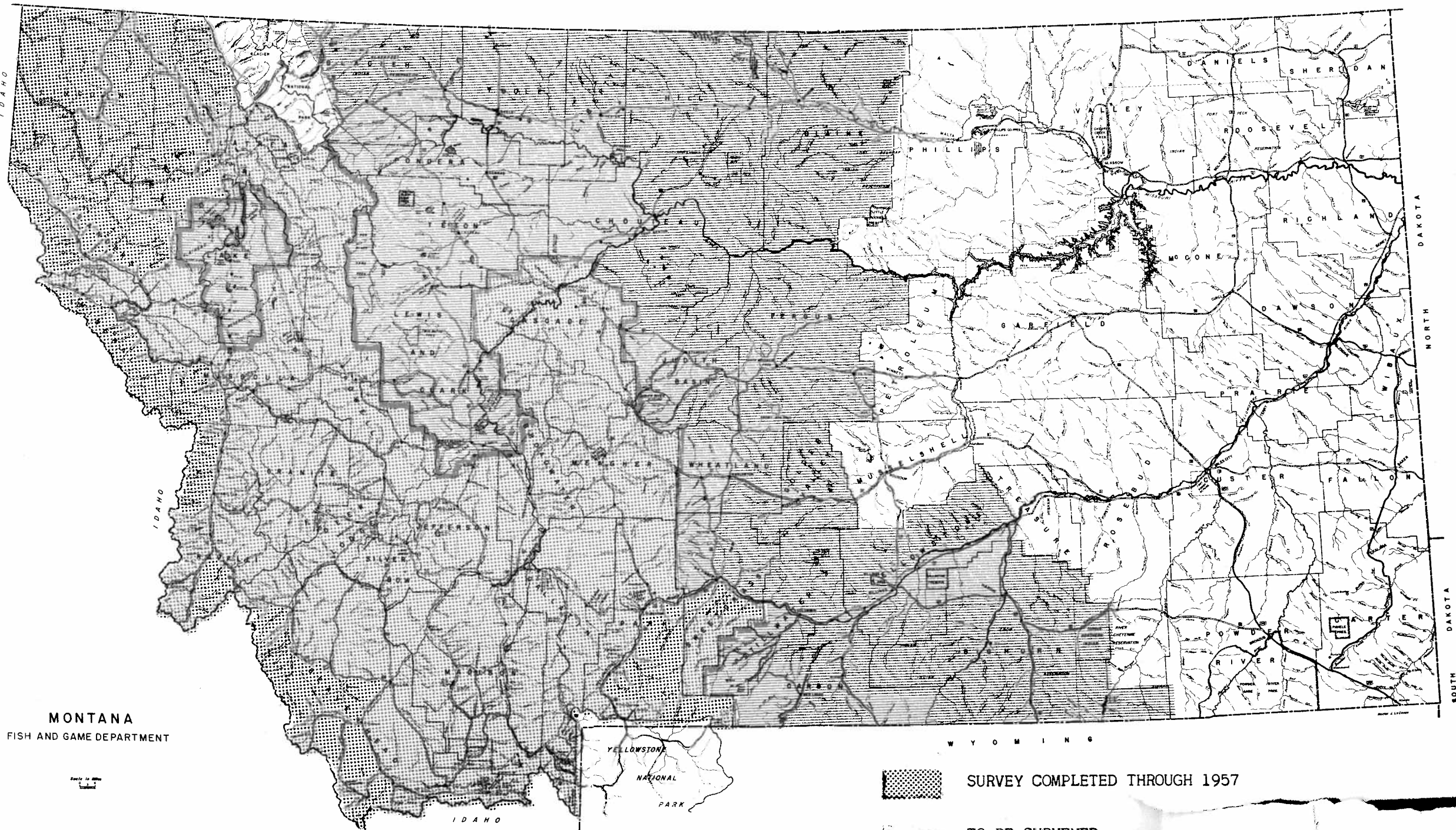
Several tracts were purchased for fishing access by the Montana Fish and Game Department through the efforts of the Department Land Agent. It is recommended that this acquisition for fishing access be continued.

It is also recommended that in event amendment is passed to the Coordination Act of 1946 allowing withdrawal of Public Domain as fishing access that these withdrawals be started as soon as possible to further insure public access for fishing.

Prepared by Clinton G. Bishop

Approved by George D. Holton

Date May 12, 1958



MONTANA
FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT



YELLOWSTONE
NATIONAL
PARK

SURVEY COMPLETED THROUGH 1957

TO BE SURVEYED