

In 1950 and 1952, respectively, the Forest Service acquired by exchange of lands the Will Ed Harris tracts and the State land in Township 25 North, Range 15 East, including La Junta Canyon. The Pueblo asserted an interest in both the Harris Tract No. 2 (exhibit 71) and the La Junta Canyon (exhibit 50) on the basis of its long-continued use of those areas. As early as September 8, 1950 (exhibit 72), the Forest Service recognized the Pueblo's interest by offering to grant the Pueblo a grazing permit on the Harris tracts within the Rio Lucero drainage. The Pueblo did not accept such offer because, as the Governor explained in a letter dated March 6, 1951 (exhibit 73), to the United Pueblos Agency, it was already grazing stock on those areas and did not understand "why we should ask you or anyone else for a permit to use our own land." On April 10, 1951 (exhibit 74), the Service offered to grant the Pueblo a grazing permit for La Junta Canyon upon completion of the exchange with the State. The Pueblo finally asked for a permit in 1956 (exhibit 70) but no permit has been granted.

The Pueblo reluctantly authorized the filing under the Indian Claims Act of a claim which included the Blue Lake area. The Indians feared that the filing of the claim would prejudice their demand for ownership, and they required their claim attorney to make clear in the petition their desire for the land rather than money. At one point, the Pueblo undertook to discharge its claim attorney because they feared he would seek a monetary recovery for the Blue Lake area (exhibit 75).

By 1955, after constant urging by the Pueblo, a bill was prepared (in substance the same as the present bill, H.R. 3306) to grant a trust patent to 50,000 acres. However, after opposition was expressed the bill was modified to amend the 1933 act by adding 20,000 acres to the permit area. That bill was introduced in 1955 as H.R. 7758 (8:1) (exhibit 76). Identical bills were introduced in 1957 and 1959 by Senator Anderson as S. 48 (85:1) and S. 903 (86:1). The Pueblo was not satisfied with the proposed additions to the permit area instead of a trust patent, but the Indians were advised that the bills should be supported as a first step, until the Indian Claims Commission had ruled the Indians were the original owners of the land.

The Secretary of the Interior, in reporting to the Senate committee on S. 48 and S. 903, had asked an amendment to permit the Secretary of Agriculture to harvest mature timber in the permit area (exhibit 77). When that recommendation was discovered by the Pueblo it protested to Assistant Secretary Ernst on October 3, 1959 (exhibit 78), pointing out that harvesting such timber would disrupt the area and was unnecessary. The letter stated: "* * * the area sacred to our tribe (which is more than only the shores of Blue Lake) would be dragged, trampled, perhaps burned over. The very thing which the existing permit, and the act of May 31, 1933, protects us and the area against, would be done if commercial lumbering were permitted." Mr. Ernst later met with the Governor and agreed to sponsor a more satisfactory bill (exhibit 79).

1960-67.—In the spring of 1960 the Pueblo requested the Department of the Interior to sponsor a bill to give it a trust patent to the 50,000 acres comprising the Rio Pueblo watershed and the Rio Lucero areas (exhibit 80). However, no bill was introduced until Senator Anderson sponsored S. 3085 (89:1) in 1965. The delay was attributable to the national election in 1960 and to the advice of the