JACK D. JONES

6-27-95

Hi Gus -

Here is the
article mentioned
to you. Sorry
I didn't get it
to you sooner.

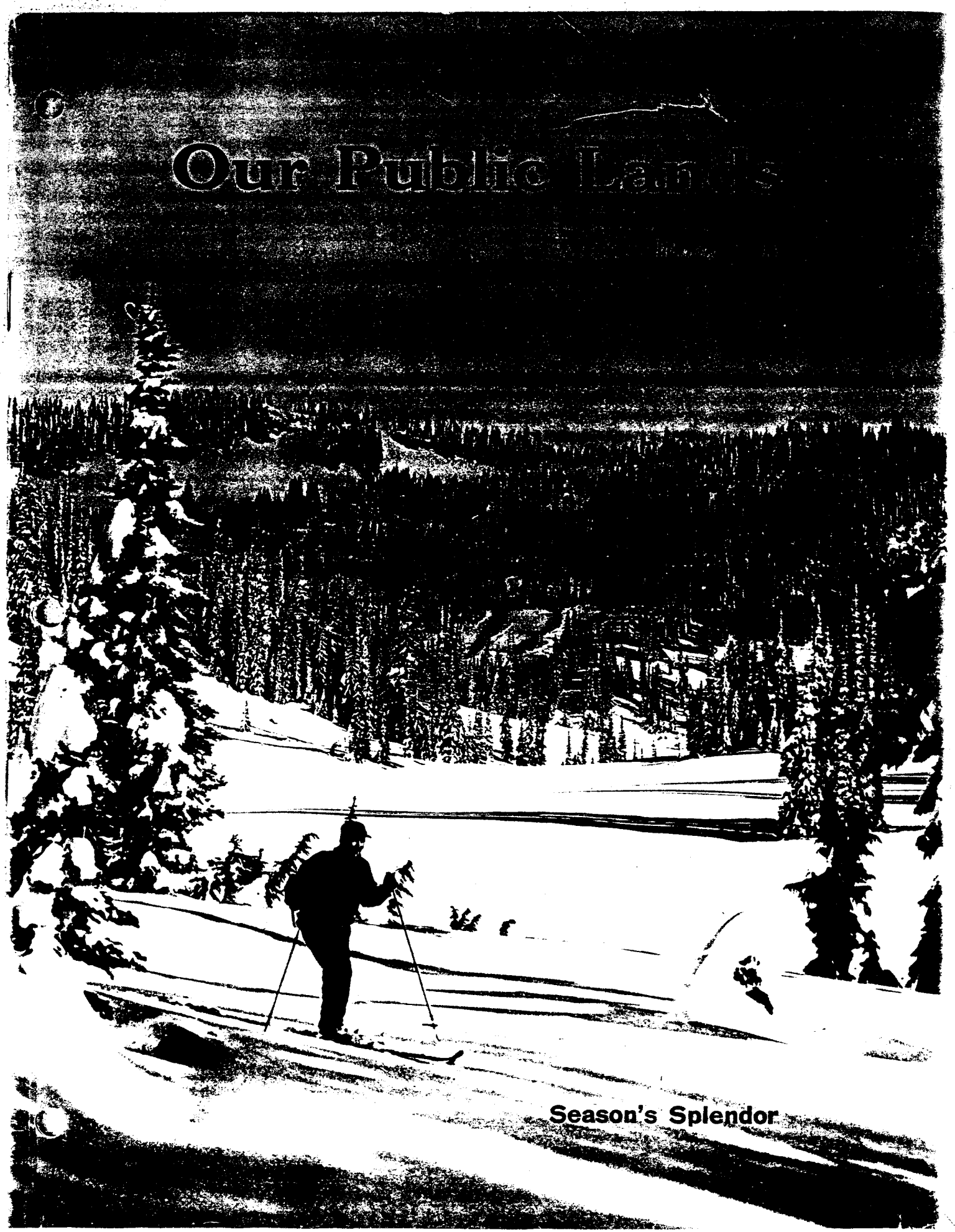
Hope all is well
with you.

Will we be seeing
you one of these
days?

Best Regards.

Jack

Our Public Lands



Season's Splendor

REST CURE *for* "TIRED" GRASS

By Floyd E. Kinsinger,
BLM Range Scientist

ANCIENT AND MODERN FARMERS have used crop rotation to resuscitate the land and maintain a higher level of crop productivity, especially in the arid regions.

Now this new-old principle is being tested by the Bureau of Land Management as a means of increasing grass production on public domain lands in western United States.

"Rest rotation" is but one of several tools BLM is using to make grazing lands yield more grass for livestock and wildlife and provide better watershed protection. It goes almost without saying that increased forage production and greater ground surface cover protect the watershed, add scenic beauty to the landscape and enhance recreation opportunities. These are BLM goals under multiple-use land management authorized by Congress last year.

Rest-rotation on grasslands is beyond the experimental stage, yet its full value remains to be evaluated from pilot tests now underway. Up to now, most research and practical application have been done by the U.S. Forest Service. Now it gives bright promise of making the BLM-administered ranges a better place for man and beast.

This plan of grazing, based primarily on growth requirements of important forage plants, means "rest" for the plants during a critical part of the growing season—in some cases all of the growing season. This permits the plants to regain vigor lost as a result of grazing, or other causes, and provides a seed crop for replenishing the range.

Livestock Kept Moving

Rest-rotation is applied simply by moving livestock from area to area during the grazing season, thereby giving designated portions of the range respite from the nibbling herds. This can be accomplished primarily by proper fencing; in some cases, by control of livestock water. During the "rest" periods, the plants gain time needed for a new thrust of growth before the livestock are permitted to return to the "rested" area.

In addition to recapturing their vigor for new growth, the grasses yield a better crop of seed which, in turn, is planted by hooves of the returning animals. This brightens prospect for perpetuation of the grass crop. It also means better control of undesirable grass species. Increased production and reproduction of forage plants mean greater range capacity for livestock and wildlife, also protection of water resources, plus all the aesthetic benefits to man.

Rest-rotation pilot projects are being established in each of BLM's 50-odd grazing districts. By testing the system under many combinations of soil, vegetation, and climate, range experts hope to attain a dependable evaluation of the results. For one thing, the tests should give definite clues as to conditions necessary for the success of the method.

As a tool of range management, rest-rotation can be successful only in the degree of cooperation between the Bureau and the range user. Each of the rest-rotation projects established to date has been developed cooperatively by the user and Bureau technicians.

When the grass has been sufficiently grazed, it is time for the cattle to move on to "greener pastures," giving the grazed grass a chance to regain its vigor.