

Jones foresees Sagebrush failure

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Attorney General Jim Jones said Friday he sees little need for pressing a lawsuit that Idaho had joined on the Sagebrush Rebellion.

Jones explained Idaho joined the suit as friend of the court with some other western states but that "it is more or less sitting" in U.S. court.

Jones added he doubts whether the lawsuit calling for shifting of federal land to the states will be successful in view of a previous case that turned down such a transfer.

Jones said he questions whether the legal action will be pushed because of the sympathetic leadership in the Reagan administration and Senate. Secretary of Interior James Watt has diminished the need for the movement.

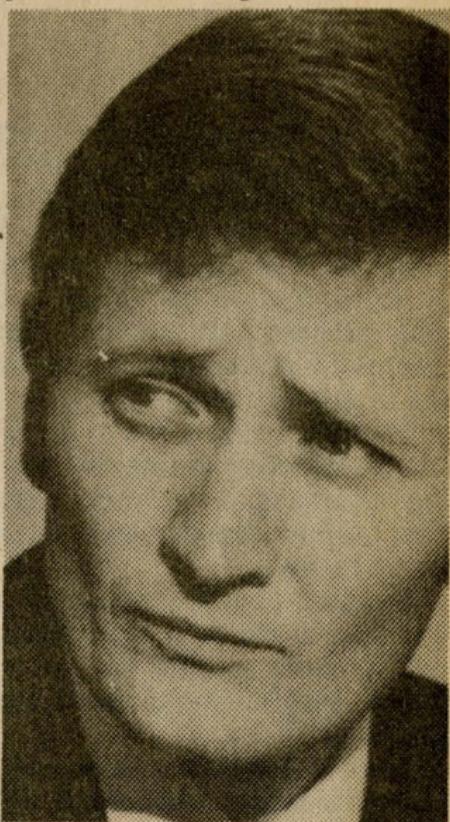
"I believe the State Land Board should explore possibilities of working with Congress and the administration in getting a bigger voice in public lands decision," said Jones. "I don't see, however, realistically the transfer of more federal land to the state."

For many years, nothing was ever done but in the last few years and especially the last two years under Reagan, all this designated federal land has been transferred to the state except 4,000 acres. These are wrapped up in the wilderness controversy that may not be settled for a few years. In addition, there are 3,000 acres more of mineral land for which discussions have not even been started.

"I'm going to push for early transfer of these remaining lands," said Jones.

Under the federal-state agreement when Idaho joined the union in 1890, Idaho gave up some 38,000 acres of land, based on certain parcels in each section and the federal government agreed to replace those with an equivalent parcels.

Revenue from this land goes to the School Endowment Fund to help schools.



Jim Jones