

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #76 - Side B

Place: Island Ranch & Square Wells

Date: June 15, 1977

Interviewers: Pauline Braymen & Ruth Bright

Release Form: Yes

HANK VOGLER IV: I have an idea.

RUTH BRIGHT: I didn't know they had a line in here. (Talking about the railroad.)

HANK: Before they ran the line all the way into Burns, that was probably where they shipped cattle, you know, even from Burns.

PAULINE BRAYMEN: The train still goes right through here. It connects up with Ontario.

HANK: That's some of what's his name's crows. Now there is your typical coyote kill right there. See that dead lamb?

PAULINE: Yeah.

HANK: Killed the lamb and ate the insides out of it to go puke up to the pups.

RUTH: And it doesn't eat the rest of the lamb?

HANK: No, they just kill them. I'll come back here about dark; he'll be back. Too windy to fly too.

RUTH: Those ravens are having a hard time of it.

HANK: Look at all them ravens. Pretty near every one of them down here is marked. Wish he'd come and get 'em.

RUTH: Have you told him that you've got a lot of marked ravens out here?

HANK: Yeah.

RUTH: Has he been out here looking at all?

HANK: I don't know. I called him up one time. Buck told me to call him if I ever seen any. I see them up here all of the time.

PAULINE: We see them. Allan has seen them up there at our place, up there too.

HANK: ... when all of this was under water, a big slough. Bet that was quite a thing.

RUTH: I can't imagine, really, a lot of water around here. You know, I've only been here four and a half years and it has always been in the summertime except this last year.

HANK: There is hardly any place beside on either side of the dike that you can't swim a saddle horse. Just right out across the field.

PAULINE: It is so unusual to see it this way this year. It is just unbelievable.

HANK: Really, yeah. Everybody says, "Gosh, this is sure pretty up here. Gosh, it's nice."

PAULINE: It looks terrible.

HANK: It makes you sick.

PAULINE: It makes you want to cry.

HANK: See we'd bring our cattle over here and then trail 'em to the valley. And then when we had the valley, they controlled at one time over a 100,000 acres.

RUTH: What valley?

HANK: Well, we used to have the majority of the land between Crane and Buchanan, and back of Rye Grass. All that stuff that's called Meadowland now.

RUTH: Oh, where they've got the Meadowland Ranches and everything out there?

HANK: Yeah, and that was ours. And then a man come along and said, "How would you like to get out of debt?" And it was a little tough to turn down. Although I would have. But they looked at things different than I. Now there is the old Square Wells Corral, right there, original copy.

PAULINE: Look at the deer over here. Original copy.

HANK: Yeah, doe and two fawns.

RUTH: Oh, that's the first fawn I've ever seen.

HANK: One of them laid down, you want to go see? No.

RUTH: Yeah, there's two of them. Aren't they cute? I wish I had my binoculars now. I've been wanting to see; oh what I'd really like to see is a baby antelope.

HANK: There's a bunch of them down there in the field. All of these lots were built to hold cattle. You see now when they trailed their cattle; they used to trail their cattle to Call Meadow. In fact when we first come here, that was our allotment up there at Call Meadow, and over towards Pine Creek.

RUTH: Wow.

HANK: But Miller and Lux, no different than Pete French or anyone of those old timers. When they came into a country, they homesteaded and deeded up where water was. Pretty near all of the old springs back in here, all the way back to the Agency Ranch over at Harper and in there, and all of that country over there every spring, was a Company spring. Well, now even with Taylor Grazing if you can --- course it didn't come in till '34, but before that, if you controlled the water, you controlled the pasture.

RUTH: The land, yeah.

HANK: So, they just homesteaded all the springs. They got timber lots, and different things. Now there used to be three of these barns, but there is only one left. This one, it hasn't been too many years since it burned down. But there used to be three of them. There was two right here close together. One was more over by the corrals, and then this one, and then one back over here. And then that right there, where that old pump shack was, was Square Wells. And then the old boy with the mule used to set in there and pump water. And then cattle, in fact you can still, in places, if you hit just right you'll find cow trails that are all sodded in now. And follow any one of them out, and they come right to there, from any direction. Now, you know, I mean walking through the mud in the springtime, and in the winter when it would be muddy.

PAULINE: Oh wow. Let's get a picture of this.

RUTH: Yeah.

HANK: Now that may not be Pete French's barn, but ---

RUTH: Oh, that's beautiful. You know, remember when we were coming out here, and we were asking who was the hardest and who was the easiest for interview?

PAULINE: Yeah.

RUTH: I am never going to try and write notes on someone who walks around the goddamn ranch all the time.

HANK: Why is that?

RUTH: It's all rained on, and half torn up, and chewed up.

PAULINE: You said the reason that it is called Square Wells is that there are two stories. One that it had a square casing in it. And one that it was the corner of four fields. Which is the most reasonable of the two stories? And that they used a mule to pump water. They hitched up the mule and he'd go around and around in a circle and pump the water.

HANK: The cattle come from miles, even way over there by that old schoolhouse, all through there. Now, we're in the cookhouse right now. And here is another one of them big long barns right here behind. But now this long barn, I never saw. Ora Hayes told me about it. And he said now this; it wasn't just a loafing shed. It had stalls. One end of it was a loafing shed, but it had stalls and a place to keep your tack. But it was the same size as the other two. And then the cookhouse was here, I'll look around here somewhere's, yeah, there's the pump, where they pumped their water. Now this one, I don't know who the buckaroo boss was, but this is the place I'd like to find the outhouse. Because, here they were away from the headquarters, you know. Lawen is right over there; they used to have houses of ill repute, and everything over at Lawen. And it's not too far over there. I'll bet you that this is the one that's got the treasure of purple whiskey bottles. They always threw them in the outhouse, you know. It was a good place, you know, nobody would ever catch them, and hide them in the barn. In fact, I'll betcha if that old bar ever falls down, or a man tears it down, he is going to find some treasures in there.

RUTH: In this one here? No, the big one.

HANK: With the house.

RUTH: I was going to say there wouldn't be anyplace for one to be hidden in here.

PAULINE: And this is where the crews, the PLS Company crews lived?

HANK: Yeah. This is sort of their buckaroo camp, and they fed hay down here too. But they stayed down here pretty well all of the time. Well, you see this is where they trailed their cattle north to Call Meadow, and back up in there. And this is the place where they'd come across from the Agency and hit usually first.

PAULINE: How long do you think that barn is? Have you ever measured it off, or stepped it off?

HANK: No, I haven't, I never have.

PAULINE: It's long when you look at it from this angle.

RUTH: It's huge.

HANK: Well, I'll betcha that it's over 200 feet long, I'll betcha that it's close to 300 feet. I don't know.

PAULINE: I'm a terrible judge of distance; I've never done enough. I could tell you how far a yard is on material, but I have a hard time visualizing it.

HANK: I'll betcha that's pretty near 300 feet long. I'd just about betcha. Let's just count the juniper posts.

RUTH: You've got good ---

HANK: One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen. Eighteen.

RUTH: Did you count on both ends?

HANK: I'll bet it's 280 feet. No, you don't want to count the ends, just the spaces between.

RUTH: Yeah, okay.

HANK: I'll betcha they're ten feet across, because I know I can lay down between the two of them. We'll say ten feet, and there's eighteen of them.

RUTH: 180 feet.

HANK: 180 feet. So I'll betcha it's 200 feet anyhow.

RUTH: Yeah.

HANK: One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight --- that's eighteen, there's eighteen of them.

Eighteen spaces between; don't count the posts, just count the spaces between.

RUTH: Yeah.

HANK: And each post has got at the bottom at least a foot, so you got to add another 18 feet.

RUTH: It's a good 200 feet then.

HANK: Over 200 feet long. And there must be, and it's more distance, and there's two posts back, and there's twice the distance there. So it's probably 50 feet by 200 and some feet. I would say roughly, guesstimate.

PAULINE: It was always open on the east side this way?

HANK: Uh huh. And so was the other one.

RUTH: What else did they have besides the cookhouse and the three barns? And of course the well house.

HANK: Well, the cookhouse and there was probably, the cookhouse probably a cook shack, and then they probably had a buckaroo bunkhouse, and whatever. Now that part of it I never saw, to my knowledge. Now maybe when I was a baby, but I only remember the two barns.

RUTH: Yeah.

HANK: ... that, but it didn't work. But it got to the point where my god, you run 5,000 head of cows and you had such a crew of men all the time, and you couldn't get good help and, you know, it was just, it got to be more than --- And Grandpa was getting old, and Dad threw his hands in, and said he didn't want to do it. And I did, but I was, you know ---

RUTH: You were a little young.

PAULINE: You were a little too young at that point.

HANK: Get too excited.

RUTH: Your dad just got fed up with ranching, huh?

HANK: Well, not so much with ranching, he just got fed up with the whole attitude, of everybody's

attitude. It just got to be that, well when we first started, the mill, we competed with the mill. A guy come to the community, he went to work on a ranch, or he went to work at the mill. Well, then all of a sudden the mill wages shot up, we could no longer compete with mill wages.

RUTH: So, you couldn't get anybody but has beens, so to speak.

HANK: Well, yeah. In other words, now a guy comes to town, if he can't get on at the mill, and he can't get on at a service station or something, and he is really desperate, well then he might come out to ranch and work long enough to get on his feet to go somewhere else.

PAULINE: That's how long they'll work too, just long enough to

HANK: To get another jug, or to get on their feet. That's your options, you know. Now like my hippie, now there's a dandy. Other than the fact that he don't know anything.

RUTH: Yeah.

HANK: He is just as happy as a lark. He just ---

RUTH: I have friends in Portland, hippie friends in Portland that would give their eyeteeth just to work, you know, on a place like this. They work, you know, they work like --- well I have one guy who hates working indoors, and he's really handy. He goes out, he'll build things, he'll work on cars, and he knows all kinds of odds and ends. Real handyman type. But he hates the city, and he hates making a living in the city, so he, what he does is he's a janitor for a movie theater, and all they dream about is some day getting away from the city. But they never can get cash enough together to leave.

HANK: Yeah. Well, you sure don't make any money on a ranch, but old hair-do, now I'll tell you what ---

RUTH: Well, you know, most of those hippies don't want to make money. All they want to do is live away from the city.

HANK: Well, I suppose. But you have to show him everything, sometimes twice what to do. But by golly, I'll tell you what, now he, I suppose you got a million pictures of them old Jackson

Feeders, haven't you?

RUTH: The what?

HANK: Jackson Feeders.

RUTH: What is that?

HANK: Where they used to have a horse walk around and they pick up a grapple of hay and put it on a wagon.

RUTH: I don't even know what they are.

PAULINE: Whoa. Show her, she lives in Harney County and doesn't know what a Jackson Fork is, her education is lacking.

HANK: Well, now the Jackson Fork goes on the end. They call them Mormon Derricks, but if you are going to be polite, they are a Jackson Feeder.

RUTH: Okay.

HANK: And they are a Mormon Derrick. But a, no, my hippies, he's a tremendous guy. He's 18 years old; he's been kicked from pillar to post, run off by both parents, and in and out of trouble.

RUTH: Where's he from?

HANK: Portland. He come down here last summer and went to work for me, and he's been here for almost a year.

RUTH: How did he find out about you guys?

HANK: His mother was shacking up with one of the guys that worked around here. And she asked if I could get him a job. He's buying him a car, you know. Put that old truck together and he just, he just doesn't seem to have any ambitions to leave or anything else, he's ---

RUTH: He'll probably be here forever.

HANK: Yeah. I think he probably has the equivalent to about a third grade education. He's never stayed in one place long enough to get any education. He's quite a kid. He has a lot of problems, he's real hyperactive and he gets a little scatterbrained once in awhile.

(Explanation of how the Jackson Fork works.)

HANK: ... out and that cable would hook through a pulley on the end of that, and then it would come down and a guy would get up on the stack and he would take this grapple and he would push one half of it in here, and one half of it in here, and then that would be hooked. We used tractors, when I used to use it. But before that they'd have horses. They'd have their team that they had for their wagon. They'd unhook their teams off the wagon, hook it on to their derrick, or maybe one horse, I'm not sure, but they'd hook it on. And then you'd drive away a little bit, well then that would pull that cable tight, and that would pull those grapples together and pick up a wad of hay, and then that would bring them together. Then you would turn it around.

RUTH: Turn it around.

HANK: See that whole center beam pivots.

RUTH: Yeah.

HANK: Then it pivots, and then you would swing it around over your wagon, and back up, and then take the hooks out of the wagon and start over again. It was faster supposedly than pitching hay off.

RUTH: I've got to take a picture.

PAULINE: Well, there's a, yeah, go ahead.

HANK: When they first come here, there wasn't too much concentration of cattle or anything, you know, you could winter out, an old cow could winter pretty tough, if there is plenty of old feed. But as long as the snow doesn't get deep, they'll winter out pretty good. We have cows get away once in awhile and get out on the flat out there and they'll come in just fat and sassy. But there's just one cow, if you had a 1,000 out there, they'd never make it.

RUTH: Yeah.

HANK: When we had the valley we'd get, once in a while, we'd get a few that would winter out, out there. Never would come in. And by golly they did all right, they didn't have any problems. But, because there was lots of old feed, it'd stick up above the snow, and they could root it out. But they say this valley was practically all grass. You know the Indians burnt this whole country off.

It's just like the Great Plains the people thought the trees would never grow on the Great Plains, because there were no trees. And by golly all it was, was the Indians just set it on fire all of the time. They hunted with fire.

RUTH: Well, the Indians also, a lot of them knew in certain areas knew that to get your game birds up, you know, which was a livelihood for them, you had to have meadow areas, you know, and good grass. And they would intentionally; it was like their own conservation practice.

HANK: Right. Well, if it wasn't for haystacks in this country, this country could stand to be burned several times. I've gone out and set fires in these greasewood knobs when these meadows are all full of water. Burned last years grass off, and it burns all of that old brush out of there, and salt grass and the native grasses come back twice as thick.

RUTH: Huh. Three schools at Lawen were Otley, Ruh, and Campbell schools.

HANK: Well, they'd be Ruh schools.

RUTH: That one out there.

HANK: I don't know if the secretary is just spicing things up, the timekeeper, but it said in there, he left on account of Indians. But that's safe; that was the biggest crime of all. I'll betcha there was records, and letters in there that would just, really be just exciting to just go through.

RUTH: They just tried to cut it with a torch, huh?

HANK: Here is something, however they did it they set the safe on fire and they burned up what was in it. You guys aren't weak-kneed about these dikes, are you?

PAULINE: No, I'm not.

RUTH: Yeah, I am. I'm weak-kneed about anything in a car. And I used to be --- Oh, look at the deer.

HANK: The deer population just tripled, quadrupled.

RUTH: The deer are kind of smart; they split up.

HANK: Yeah.

PAULINE: Oh, I could probably taste it before. Oh, I tell you, we had a buck and three does that

stayed right there around the house all summer, last summer. In fact, the buck laid in the shade of the haystack while the hired man fenced the haystack. Fenced him right in.

RUTH: I'll be darned.

PAULINE: They were just really tame, you know. They come up right in the alfalfa field right there by the house. Then hunting season opened and I kept, well all of the neighbors were watching out for them, and if they saw them along the road, they'd chase them, you know, get out and yell at them, chase them. But one afternoon, about the last weekend of hunting season...

HANK: Just like out here. I let old Jett Blackburn and somebody like that, some old guy that can't get around, I let him hunt out here. Any young upstart comes out and wants to hunt a deer out here, I tell them, "Well, Jesus Christ, look at all them mountains, look at all the exercise you can get." But Jett, you know, he just can't go out and beat the hills.

RUTH: He can't do it anymore.

HANK: Smitty, he comes out once in a while with this guy, and that, you know. Guys that just can't get out. Old Verne Ledgerwood, he came out last year, I believe.

But by golly, I'll tell you what, acre for acre I'll bet you there's more birds on this ranch than there ever is on that Refuge, because we've got some place for them to nest. You got a big pond of water out there, only your water nesting, like the mud hen; they nest out in the water like that. But those geese, hell in the spring all through here, high on those greasewood knobs, it's just full of goose nests. You can't, you can't walk anywhere on this ranch along one of these sloughs and not find a goose nest. There's ducks, they nest out in these greasewood knobs. And then that water, if we turn that water loose, well then those birds will all go to the deep water. Then if a coyote's gonna get them, they've got to swim for them, and they've got a pretty even chance. My dogs can't even catch a bird if he's swimming, hardly, because they dive under the water. But down there where they hold that water about that deep, well hell, they can dive under water, and the coyote walks along, and when he comes up he gets them.

RUTH: Have you ever talked to C. D. about his statistics from bird studies?

HANK: C. D.?

RUTH: Littlefield.

HANK: Oh yeah.

RUTH: Okay. We were in an office next door to him last summer, and they were doing their duck counts or something like that. And they had more duck counts for every place except the Refuge. All the ranchers in Harney County were raising more ducks than the Refuge was.

PAULINE: But you can't graze any cattle on the Refuge because you gotta have nesting facilities for the birds.

HANK: You know what would be the best thing they could do for that lake?

RUTH: Dry it up.

HANK: No, my god that water is a commodity.

RUTH: Drain it?

HANK: Drain it? They could put in a sump, find the bottom of that lake and put a big sump out there and screen it off.

RUTH: Well, to control that carp, that's the only way they are going to be able to manage it.

HANK: And make it environmentally safe so the birds couldn't get into it. They got about a ten-foot lift in the center of that lake and they could sell that water to these meadow landers out here and they could irrigate this whole valley. Practically ... something like 200,000 acre feet of water evaporate off of that lake every year. Well, 200,000 acre-feet will irrigate 50,000 acres.

RUTH: Well, right now Bill says that the ducks won't even use that lake, except for just sitting --- there is no feed.

PAULINE: There is no food, there's no food there.

HANK: When Ormand and Standley and them used to farm that years ago, my god, and we used to farm, and everybody used to farm, my god there was just, why the birds get up off the grain field and they would just blacken the sky.

PAULINE: Uncle Ormand figured himself a millionaire many times over with the grain that the

birds ate.

HANK: Yup.

PAULINE: It's unbelievable the amount of birds that was in this country.

HANK: Let's say one goose eats a pound a day, or a pound at a feeding. Now a cow eats three percent of their body weight, and the smaller animal the closer, the higher percentage. Like a humming bird eats five times its body weight every day. Now you take a goose, let's just give him the benefit of the doubt. If he eats twice a day, he eats two pounds of grain a day. A thousand birds, that's two tons a day.

RUTH: That's a lot of grain.

HANK: When I was, well in the '60's, even as late as the '60's, there was nothing to see 8,000 or 10,000 geese, 500 to a 1,000 cranes, and I wouldn't even want to try to put a count on the ducks.

RUTH: Well, not all that many people raise grain, do they?

HANK: Not any more.

PAULINE: Not any more.

HANK: Not only is it unprofitable, the cost of everything has gone up so fast in relation to farm commodities, that it's not profitable. Well in other words, it's not that you can't raise it here, it's just that --- alright, 20 years ago your cost of putting it in versus your return was closer to making it a make or a break deal, you could come out on it. But now you can't stand a failure. But in this valley, where it's marginal with your frost conditions, you can have a failure. Not always a total failure, but you can have a failure. Well, on today's market, and today's situation, one failure puts you out of the business. Twenty years ago, you might have five failures in a row, and one success and make money.

RUTH: Yeah.

PAULINE: And the success would carry you through the next five failures.

HANK: Yeah, and the success would carry you through, but you can't do that today. It's got to be a lead pipe cinch every year.

RUTH: So one failure and that's it?

HANK: One failure and that's it. It's very marginal to even try it, to even bother with anything like it. But I mean, it can be raised here, and it will be raised here, I guarantee it. Alfalfa and small grains will be raised in Harney County again in large supply.

If they would drain that lake, and put some drainage ditches in this valley, it would improve the quality of our meadows. It would improve the quality of our ground because we would get rid of these water --- and would get rid of this sub-water and yet they could still pump enough good, high enough quality water out of that lake to irrigate several thousand acres consistently, and still quadruple the bird population. Because they would have adequate feed.

RUTH: Well, they would have the feed.

HANK: When I was going to school in Nevada, I used to live out there at Fallon. I talked to some of the old timers out there and the birds that wound up down there in that ... irrigation project was considered a lost bird years ago. That just wasn't in their normal flyway, out there in the Carson Sink. Now they have all that agriculture out there, all those drainage ditches and canals, and all of the banks that is growed up with grasses and willows, and one thing and another. They have duck clubs down there, and every darned thing, you know, a surplus of them.

RUTH: Well, they are really fading out here.

HANK: Well, then too, you've got to realize in the '60's and even in the '50's they started these huge projects up there on the Columbia River, Columbia Basin Projects. Well, now they started putting in corn, and peas, and alfalfa, and wheat; irrigated crops. So a lot of these birds now live on the Columbia River, and don't even migrate through here. After this vacuum is filled with birds, with what population it'll support, and what migratory population it'll support, I believe if we have the feed here they'll come back as they increase. But it has no reflection on the cattle, no reflection on the agriculture industry here because if it did, why did they all go to the Columbia Basin and that's what they are doing up there?

RUTH: Yeah.

HANK: They're not, they're not taking that Columbia out of the river and making big ponds of water to lie stagnate and get full of carp, they're farming with it. They're using it for something productive, and at the same time ---

RUTH: It's producing birds.

HANK: Ten fold. They are increasing their bird population. When my dad used to live at Connell, to hunt a duck, to get a duck out there was just about like killing a trophy elk in Harney County, to get a duck or a goose. Because they came through, they came over in the spring, and down on the river they hunted them, but not out at Connell. My god, you know, maybe there would be one little flight would set out in them wheat fields heading south, but it was just too far to water. But now they've got those projects out there, and here the birds are. They have developed a local nesting population. It's not just migratory birds. This is another theory I've heard. Well, that would, if you raised more grain there, they would just help the migratory birds, but it wouldn't help the local nesting population. That's bunk, because the local nesting population, the ground can only raise so many birds, because they have to have so much room for birds. But if you've got feed for them, they'll make room, they'll make room.

The best farm ground in Harney County is right down there under that lake. And if that lake was drained, and farmed, and diked --- sure if they put dikes and drainage ditches and things in there, then those birds would have deep water to where when the ducks and the baby geese come off, they could get out to some deep water to where if a coyote or a predator got after them, he swims. But if the predator could walk across the water and get the bird, well it doesn't have a chance.

RUTH: It doesn't have a chance.

HANK: Doesn't have a chance. Because he can watch, and the water is clear, and the birds swims away, and he just follows him until he comes up. Bingo, he's got his bird.

PAULINE: Speaking of birds, look at the little ---

HANK: Oh, isn't that a pretty bird?

RUTH: Oh, wow.

HANK: What kind of bird is that?

PAULINE: Well, I think it must be a tanager, but I'm not sure. I'll have to go home and get my bird book out.

HANK: We've got some resident humming birds that come in every year too.

PAULINE: It's not big enough to be a tanager.

HANK: ... now all right, let's say, let's preserve a small part of it, but, you know, why the whole thing.

RUTH: Yeah.

HANK: You wouldn't need that, even for migratory birds. As far as that goes, I suppose if they were migratory birds, they'd use that Harney Lake, it's some place to set. If they had a place for at night to set, to go out to feed the next day, they could use Harney Lake. I'm sure they would find a place to set. I've seen them camp right out in these fields all night and never leave, you know. So I don't see why you have to, you know, the only way they are going to get this back to nature is if everybody moves back to Europe.

RUTH: Yeah.

PAULINE: Well, the thing of it is, is that conditions have been changed down there by man, and you can't get away from that. Because you've got to go back to prehistoric times before Indians. Because the Indian managed the lake by burning it, and one thing and another. And then the, just the climatic cycle of dry years and wet years. The thing would dry up, and the water flowed through from one lake to the other, and washed, and one thing and another. It's all been changed by man, and you can't call it natural.

HANK: If they wanted to make a lake out of that water, what would be wrong with opening up that Princeton gap again and running it down there and building a big reservoir on that South Fork, in that canyon some down there, and sell that water down to Vale and around Ontario where they've got the growing season, you know. There's land, I'm sure, that they would love to have that water

down there. And then you would have your big lake.

But Steens Mountain produces the most amount of water for that lake, because of agricultural practices on this end. And the water flow, it has been proven that more water flows out of the Steens than does out of the Silvies Drainage. And then you have more agriculture use up on this end of it.

But no, if they would --- and they talk about putting this under an irrigation project, and building that Silvies Dam, why that's insanity. Because when this house was new and being built, these guys were homesteading the high ridges and getting water rights on the high ridges to where if they had water on the land that they applied for water rights, they could flood a 1,000 acres around it. And then they homesteaded ... they could too, you know, and bought them up. But by putting a river project on this, you're talking an assessment against the land of around anywhere from a \$1,000 to \$1,500 an acre, by the time you got it into something that is producing. And we just don't have the climate, and we just don't have the ---

RUTH: Yeah, and you don't have the season for growing.

HANK: No. If you had a 180 days I could see it. But now --- and that would be a very expensive project. But how expensive would it be to put a sump out in the middle of that lake and run a couple of miles of pipe, with very little lift. You'd have a high volume pump with a little lift. And then sell that water; it'd be metered out by the gallon practically. And you could meter it out. They could run ditches or sprinklers off of it. It would be a real cheap project. And all this excess non-used water would be suddenly; grow something. Besides you'd have all that lakebed down there to farm. And it would still get wet every year as the lake filled up. And then when she filled up, turn your irrigation water on, and suck her down. That would control your carp population.

RUTH: They really need something to control that carp population. Every time we fly over that, it's just one brown pool after another.

HANK: Oh yeah, it's full of carp.

PAULINE: That all used to be open, is what people tell me. That all used to be one big open

water. And now, you know, it isn't, its tules grown up. And here, you know, there's not much open water anymore down there. It's all marshy and ---

HANK: When I was a kid we used to get out in the sloughs, you know, on a hot summer day and walk through the water, you know, and you'd just have these reeds, not reeds, but this, I guess it's what they call that duck weed.

RUTH: Yeah.

HANK: Just be full, you couldn't even hardly walk through the water.

RUTH: There isn't any of it.

HANK: Now you can ---

PAULINE: Yeah, the sago pond weed.

RUTH: Sago pondweed.

HANK: Yeah. But it used to just be everywhere, you just could

--- Well you couldn't, you just, when the water would start to go down it would just make a mat, it'd look like it was dry ground there would be so much of it. But it would be water, you know. There's nothing like that now, it's just all, just carp.

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