

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL  
LAND OFFICE

TO THE

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

FOR THE

FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1920



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## SUMMARY OF REPORTS OF SURVEYORS GENERAL.

## ALASKA.

The surveyor general reports having approved returns of public-land surveys amounting to 612.28 miles of established lines representing 18 full and fractional townships, an increase over last year of 7½ per cent. The field cost (\$44.01) shows a reduction of \$9 per mile, and the office cost (\$3.67) was 50 cents per mile less than in 1919. In the mining branch 11 surveys were approved, covering 169 locations, at an office cost per location of \$14.31, as against \$18.83 last year; approved 21 forest homestead surveys, as against 5 forest homestead surveys in 1919. The office cost per survey was \$6.67, about \$2 less than last year. Miscellaneous surveys by United States deputy surveyors were disposed of as follows: Approved and forwarded to General Land Office, 21; approved 3 surveys by United States surveyors, such as town sites, homesteads and Indian allotments, and issued 63 special instructions during the year; received \$281.15 for copies of records, for 1922 an apportionment of \$100,000 is recommended for surveys in Alaska, with the following statement:

The area of Alaska and the extent of the unappropriated and unsurveyed lands are so well known that it is thought superfluous again to refer to it. With the completion of the Government railroad, traffic is necessary if the road is to be operated at a profit. This calls for settlers along its lines within distances permitting the use of the road, and efforts are being made to induce such settlements. The first concern of a settler is in the title of his homestead or land, and before title can be given the land must be surveyed. This requires extending the rectangular surveys along the lines of the railroad and over areas that are tributary to it in both the Susitna and Tanana Valleys. There are, also, isolated settlements between the rectangular surveys of these valleys that should be surveyed and referred to either the Seward or Fairbanks meridians. Such settlements exist and should be cared for, even if it involves the surveying of noncontiguous townships. In extending the rectangular surveys, only the best and most adaptable land for cultivation should be surveyed; tracts of swamp land, that may in the future be drained and brought under cultivation, should not be surveyed at this time. This plan should be followed, even if it results in the survey of fractional townships. The surveys in the Chilkat Valley should be further extended along the Klehini River to the international boundary line. There are many small agricultural settlements in close proximity to the larger towns and mining centers, where a ready market for products is found, that should be surveyed, even if it becomes necessary to establish an independent base and meridian.

The number of applications for the survey of homesteads under the provisions of the act of Congress approved June 23, 1918 (40 Stat. 632), has increased over last year, and it is expected that the increase will continue as it becomes known that such surveys are made by the Government without expense to the settler. The survey of Indian allotments will also increase for the same reason. There are now more outstanding instructions than can be surveyed by one crew of surveyors assigned to the work during the present surveying season. There is a great deal of fine pasture land in the valleys of southeastern and southwestern Alaska, and it has been demonstrated that stock can be profitably raised, red top and other nutritious grasses being abundant. Kodiak Island, where probably the greatest number of settlers is to be found, and Eagle River Valley, where the settlers find ready market in Juneau, are the most in need of surveys at this time. While it is desirable that where there are a number of settlers the rectangular surveys be extended to embrace such settlements, there are many isolated tracts to be surveyed, and it will be necessary to survey them as such. In making such isolated surveys it is recommended that the location monuments to which the surveys are connected be tied by course and distance to one of the triangulation stations of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey whenever it is practicable to do so. In view of the conditions herein stated it is considered that the estimate of \$100,000 for the surveying service of Alaska in 1922 is conservative.

#### ARIZONA.

The surveyor general reports that his office has approved the returns of 3,201½ miles of public-land surveys during 1920 and 1,780½ miles of railroad-grant surveys. This is a decrease of 300 miles from the record of 1919 for public-land surveys and 6,889 miles of railroad surveys. The field cost of these surveys shows an increase of \$3 per mile for the former and a decrease of \$3 per mile for the latter. The office cost per mile shows a slight decrease in the regular survey returns and a small increase in the railroad returns. It is gratifying to note that the surveys of 638 mineral claims (locations) were approved, an increase of almost 65 per cent, the office cost of which decreased 20 per cent, to \$9.48 per location, while the forest homestead surveys shows an increase in approvals of 460 per cent. The office cost of the forest homestead surveys decreased 25 per cent, or to \$9.85. Indian reservation work shows 25 miles of surveys approved, and miscellaneous surveys embraced 20 miles of small holding claims. With the completion of the fragmentary surveys in groups 92 and 93, now in process of execution, the survey of all the surveyable non-Indian lands within the primary limits of the grant