

TABLE 1-2. **Disposition of the public lands, 1781-1996**

| Type of Disposition | Acres |
|--|---------------|
| Disposition by methods not elsewhere classified/a/ | 303,500,000 |
| Granted or sold to homesteaders/b/ | 287,500,000 |
| Total unclassified and homestead dispositions | 591,000,000 |
| Granted to States for: | |
| Support of common schools | 77,630,000 |
| Reclamation of swampland | 64,920,000 |
| Construction of railroads | 37,130,000 |
| Support of miscellaneous institutions/c/ | 21,700,000 |
| Purposes not elsewhere classified/d/ | 117,600,000 |
| Canals and rivers | 6,100,000 |
| Construction of wagon roads | 3,400,000 |
| Total Granted to States | 328,480,000 |
| Granted to railroad corporations | 94,400,000 |
| Granted to veterans as military bounties | 61,000,000 |
| Confirmed as private land claims/e/ | 34,000,000 |
| Sold under timber and stone law/f/ | 13,900,000 |
| Granted or sold under timber culture law/g/ | 10,900,000 |
| Sold under desert land law/h/ | 10,700,000 |
| Total miscellaneous dispositions | 224,900,000 |
| Grand Total | 1,144,380,000 |

/a/ Chiefly public, private, and preemption sales, but includes mineral entries, scrip locations, and sales of townsites and townlots.

/b/ The homestead laws generally provided for the granting of lands to homesteaders who settled upon and improved vacant agricultural public lands. Payment for the lands was sometimes permitted, or required, under certain conditions.

/c/ Universities, hospitals, asylums, etc.

/d/ For construction of various public improvements (individual items not specified in the granting acts), reclamation of desert lands, construction of water reservoirs, etc.

/e/ The Government has confirmed title to lands claimed under valid grants made by foreign governments prior to the acquisition of the public domain by the United States.

/f/ The timber and stone laws provided for the sale of lands valuable for timber or stone and unfit for cultivation.

/g/ The timber culture laws provided for the granting of public lands to settlers on condition that they planted and cultivated trees on the lands granted. Payments for the lands were permitted under certain conditions.

/h/ The desert land laws provided for the sale of arid agricultural public lands to settlers who irrigated them and brought them under cultivation.

Note: Data are estimated from available records.