

OFFICE RECORDS

Acquired	Acq
Illustration	Ill
Act of Congress	Act of Cong
Additional homestead entry	AHE
Additional stockraising homestead entry	ASRHE
Adjusted homestead entry	ADHE
Administrative site	Adm S
Agriculture, agricultural	Agri
Agriculture Experiment Station	Agri Exp Sta
Air Navigation Site	ANS
Airport	Appr
All mineral	All Min
Allotment	Allot
Amendment	Amnd
Approved	Appr
Area Administrator Order (a)	Area Adm O
Asphalt	Asph
Assignment, assign, assigned	Asgn
Atomic Energy Commission	AEC
Authorization	Auth
Aviation lease	Av Lease
Balance	Bal
Bentonite	Ben
Black Hills Meridian	BH Mer
Block	Blk
Boundary, boundaries	Bdy, Bdrs
Bureau of Indian Affairs	BIA
Bureau of Land Management	BLM
Bureau of Land Management Order	BLM O
Bureau of Land Management Order	BLM O
Bureau of Reclamation	BR
Cadastral	Cad
Cancellation, cancelled	Canc
Cash certificate	CCE
Cash entry	CCE
Certificate	Cert
Chain, chains	Ch, Cha
Circular	Circ
Classification	Clas
Coal declaratory statement	CDS
Code of Federal Regulations	CFR
Color of title	C/T
Commissioner of Lands	Com L
Communication line	Comm Ln
Communication site	Comm S
Communication agreement	Comm Agt
Community pit	Comm P
Consolidation	Consol
Condemnation	Condemn
Control Document Index	CDI
Corporation	Corp
Corrosion	Cor
Credit entry	C/E
Cursive patent	Cur Pat
Competitive Oil & Gas Request	Comp OG Req
Deficiency	Def
Desert land entry	DELE
Designated, designation	Des
Determination	Det
District Manager	DM
District Office	D/O
Ditches and/or canals	D/C
Document	Doc
Donation claim	Doc
Easement	Easmt
East	E
Effective	Efct
Elimination, eliminate	Elim
Enlarged homestead entry	EHE
Enlargement	Enlgrmt
Exchange, exchanged	X
Exchange survey	ES
Excluding, excluded	Excl
Executive Order	EO
Expire, expired	Exp
Extended, extension, extend	Ext
Farm unit	Fm U
Farmers Home Administration	FHA
Federal	Fed
Federal Aviation Administration	FAA
Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation	FFMC
Federal Power Act	FPA
Federal Power Commission	FPC
Federal Register	FR
Fifth Principal Meridian	5th P.M.
Final certificate	FC
Fish and Wildlife Service	FWS
Fissionable materials	Fis
Forest exchange	FE
Forest lie selection	FLS
Fractional	Frac
Fractional interest patent	Frac Int Pat
Free use permit	FUP
General Land Office	GLO
Geologic structure	Geol Str
Geothermal	Geo
Gold	Gd
Grain district	Gr Dist
Grazing lease	Gr Lease
Grazing increase	Gr Lic
Grazing permit	Gr Per
Hall	1/2
Headquarters site	Hdq S
Highway	Hwy
Historical Index	HI
Homestead entry	HES
Homestead entry survey	HES

Identification, identify	Ident
Illusion	Illus
Including, include	Incl
Indemnity list	IL
Indemnity selection	IS
Indian allotment	IA
Indian conveyance	IC
Indian homestead trust patent	Ind Hd Tr Pat
Indian reservation	Ind Res
Indian trust	Ind Tr
Interim conveyance	IC
Interior Decisions	ID
Interior Land Decisions	ILD
Interpretation	Interp
Isolated tract	IT
Jurisdiction	Juris
Known coal leasing area	KCLA
Known geologic structure	KGS
Known geothermal resource area	KGRA
Known leasing area	KLA
Known recoverable coal resource area	KRCRA
Land Office	LO
Land utilization	LU
Latitude	Lat
Lease	Lea
Leasable	Leas
Letter	Ltr
License	Lic
Lien selection	LS
Location, locatable	Loc
Longitude	Long
Management	Mgmt
Master Title Plat	MTP
Material site	Mat S
Meridian	Mer
Meter and bounds	M&B
Military purpose	Mil Pur
Military reservation	Mil Res
Mileage	Mil
Mineral	Min
Mineral certificate	MC
Mineral entry	ME
Mineral location	ML
Mineral Location and Contest Index	MLCI
Mineral monument	MM
Mineral survey	MS
Mining Claim Occupancy Act	MCOA or MOA
Miscellaneous	Misc
Modification	Mod
Montana	MT
Montana Principal Meridian	MPM
Monument	Mon
Mountain	Min
Multiple use	Multi Use
National Forest	NF
National Monument	N Mon
National Park	NP
National Resource Lands	NRL
National Wildlife Refuge	NWR
Nitrate	Nit
Noncompetitive	nc
North	N
North Dakota	ND
Northeast	NE
Northwest	NW
Not open to entry	NOL
Not open to lease	NOL
Not open to mining	NOM
Oil and gas	OG
Oil shale	OS
Open to entry	OE
Operation	Oper
Order	O
Oregon and California (revested lands)	O&C
Parcel	Par
Patent	Pat
Permit	Per
Personnel, Division	PER
Petroleum reserve	Pat Res
Phosphate	Pho
Planning, Division of	PL
Potassium	Pot
Power project	Pwr Proj
Power site	Per S
Principal meridian	PM
Private exchange	PX
Proclamation	Proc
Project	Proj
Propose, proposed	Prop
Prospecting permit	Pt Per
Protective withdrawal	Prot Wd
Public domain	PD
Public Land Order	PLO
Public Law	PL
Public sale	PS
Public use	Pu
Public water reserve	PWR
Purchase	Pur
Quarter	1/4
Quitclaim deed	QCd
Railroad	RR
Railroad indemnity selection	RRIS
Railroad grant	RRG
Railroad lie selection	RRLS
Railway	Ry
Range	R
Range improvement	RI
Ranger station	Rgr Sta
Reciprocal	Recpl
Reclamation homestead entry	RHE
Reclamation withdrawal	Recl Wd
Records Improvement Project	RIP
Recreation and public purpose	RAPP
Section, section	Sec
Reference	re
Refuge	Rig
Regional	Reg
Rejected and Recovered	Recl Le
Rejected, rejection	Rej
Relinquished, relinquishment	Rel
Rescind, rescinded	Resc
Reservation, reserve	Res
Reservoir	Reser
Resource Area Headquarters	RAHQ
Restoration, restored	Rest
Restricted	Restd
Revised	Rev
Revocation, revoked	Rev
Right-of-way	R/W
Road	Rd
Secretary of Agriculture	Sec of Agri
Secretary of the Interior	Sec of the Int
Secretary's Order	Sec O
Section	Sec
Segregate, segregated	Segr
Selection, selected	Sele
Serial Register	SR
Silver	Si
Simultaneous	Sim
Sixth Principal Meridian	6th P.M.
Small tract	ST
Small tract classification	STC
Small tract lease	STL
Sodium	So
South	S
South Dakota	SD
Southeast	SE
Southwest	SW
Special Land Use Permit	SLUP
State Director	S/D
State Director's Order	S/O
State exchange	SE
State grant	SG
State Office	S/O
State selection	SS
Station	Sta
Stock driveway	SD
Stock driveway withdrawal	SD Wd
Stockraising homestead entry	SHE
Subdivisions undefined	Subdiv Und
Subject	Subj
Sulphur	Sul
Survey, surveyed	Sur
Suspended	Sus
Temporary Use Permit	TUP
Terminate, termination	Term
Timber	Tmb
Timber culture	TC
Timber cutting permit	TCP
Township	Twp
Township	Twp
Township	Twp
Transfer of jurisdiction	Tr Juris
Transfer	Trf
Transmission	Trans
Treepole	Trap
Triangulation station	Tri Sta
Unappropriated	Unapprop
Underground	Undgrd
Undetermined	Undet
Unit agreement	UA
United States	U.S.
United States Air Force	USAF
United States Code	USC
United States Department of Agriculture	USDA
United States Department of the Interior	USDI
United States Forest Service	USFS
United States Geological Survey	USGS
United States Survey	USS
Unsurveyed	Unsurv
Uranium	Ur
Variable interest	Var Int
Village	V
Warranty deed	WD
Water power	WP
Water Power Resource Svc.	WPRS
Water right	WR
Watered	W
West	W
Withdrawal	Wd
Withdrawn	Wdn
Without	w/o

Range	R
Range improvement	RI
Ranger station	Rgr Sta
Reciprocal	Recpl
Reclamation homestead entry	RHE
Reclamation withdrawal	Recl Wd
Records Improvement Project	RIP
Recreation and public purpose	RAPP
Section, section	Sec
Reference	re
Refuge	Rig
Regional	Reg
Rejected and Recovered	Recl Le
Rejected, rejection	Rej
Relinquished, relinquishment	Rel
Rescind, rescinded	Resc
Reservation, reserve	Res
Reservoir	Reser
Resource Area Headquarters	RAHQ
Restoration, restored	Rest
Restricted	Restd
Revised	Rev
Revocation, revoked	Rev
Right-of-way	R/W
Road	Rd
Secretary of Agriculture	Sec of Agri
Secretary of the Interior	Sec of the Int
Secretary's Order	Sec O
Section	Sec
Segregate, segregated	Segr
Selection, selected	Sele
Serial Register	SR
Silver	Si
Simultaneous	Sim
Sixth Principal Meridian	6th P.M.
Small tract	ST
Small tract classification	STC
Small tract lease	STL
Sodium	So
South	S
South Dakota	SD
Southeast	SE
Southwest	SW
Special Land Use Permit	SLUP
State Director	S/D
State Director's Order	S/O
State exchange	SE
State grant	SG
State Office	S/O
State selection	SS
Station	Sta
Stock driveway	SD
Stock driveway withdrawal	SD Wd
Stockraising homestead entry	SHE
Subdivisions undefined	Subdiv Und
Subject	Subj
Sulphur	Sul
Survey, surveyed	Sur
Suspended	Sus
Temporary Use Permit	TUP
Terminate, termination	Term
Timber	Tmb
Timber culture	TC
Timber cutting permit	TCP
Township	Twp
Township	Twp
Township	Twp
Transfer of jurisdiction	Tr Juris
Transfer	Trf
Transmission	Trans
Treepole	Trap
Triangulation station	Tri Sta
Unappropriated	Unapprop
Underground	Undgrd
Undetermined	Undet
Unit agreement	UA
United States	U.S.
United States Air Force	USAF
United States Code	USC
United States Department of Agriculture	USDA
United States Department of the Interior	USDI
United States Forest Service	USFS
United States Geological Survey	USGS
United States Survey	USS
Unsurveyed	Unsurv
Uranium	Ur
Variable interest	Var Int
Village	V
Warranty deed	WD
Water power	WP
Water Power Resource Svc.	WPRS
Water right	WR
Watered	W
West	W
Withdrawal	Wd
Withdrawn	Wdn
Without	w/o

The records in use in the Montana State Office consist of three elements: (1) Ownership, or Master Title Plat; (2) Use Plat; and (3) Historical Index. "Use Plat" is the label assigned to Master Title Plats which also show mineral leases issued by the Bureau of Land Management. This could be Oil and Gas, Coal, Phosphate, etc. Generally, there is a separate plat for each type of mineral lease and, therefore, it is possible to have, in some cases, two or more Use Plats for the same township. The title information on the Use Plat is identical to that on the Master Title Plat, the only difference being that the Use Plat will show leases for a specific mineral, whereas the Master Title Plat does not. Each township may have all three of the above mentioned elements and is complete in every respect — being able to stand by itself in terms of title, use and historical information.

Master Title Plat

The Ownership Plat, or Master Title Plat, as it is commonly called, shows the land which has been patented, the patent numbers, the reservations to the United States as stated in the patent, and the land which is still vacant Federal land — often times referred to as vacant public domain. Withdrawals, rights-of-way, national forests, Indian reservations, wildlife refuges, and other such similar reservations and actions are also shown. Lands which have been patented and then reacquired by the United States are shown on the records and are referred to as acquired lands. Acquired lands are those which left federal ownership by patent and later purchased back, for one reason or another, — land for which actual monies were paid by the United States. Land reacquired to the United States as a result of exchanges are not acquired lands.

The first step in building the Master Title Plat was the making of a basic township plat on a scale of 30 chains to the inch. The basic plat is a constructed copy of the official township survey plat and is as nearly identical as possible. If more than one survey had been made for a township, the basic plat is a composite of all the surveys with the composite survey picture appearing on one page. Although it is either a copy or a composite of the surveys, the Master Title Plat is not to be construed as an official survey plat.

The Master Title Plat conveys title information by various weights and different shapes of lines. Each different weight or kind of line indicates a separate and distinct type of action. Each such action is annotated with an abbreviation which identifies the action or authority for the actions. The Legend of Abbreviations and Symbols sheet shows the various lines used and a meaning of the different abbreviations.

The Explanatory Township, which accompanies this discussion, has been prepared to show most of the types of lines used and the information conveyed by each. For the purpose of illustration, it has been labeled Township 19 North, Range 20 East, Principal Meridian, Montana. The following explanation will further assist the reader in using the Explanatory Township:

The light-weight line surrounding Section 7 is the weight of the survey lines which appear on the basic plat. Section 3 and Section 8 show how lots appear. Note that the subdivision lines separating lots are not full length, only partial; they are called tick marks. These partial subdivision lines are the only survey lines shown within a section. Survey lines for a full 40-acre subdivision in a section are not shown. Section 4 shows how the boundary between surveyed and unsurveyed lands is indicated.

In Sections 5 and 6, there is shown a line which is used to identify Federal withdrawals whenever only a portion of township is under withdrawal. These lines are annotated, as to purpose and effective date, at the lower extremity of the area embraced in the withdrawal. If the entire township is in the withdrawal, such as a national forest or Indian reservation, the withdrawal line is not used. Instead, a notation on the right-hand side of the plat will state that the entire township is affected by the withdrawal.

The annotation in Section 9 is for Public Law 167, the Act of July 23, 1955. This law pertains to administrative jurisdiction by the United States over surface resources on unpatented mining claims. Since it does not affect title, there is no need to give it further attention in discussions concerning title.

In Sections 13, 14, and 15, are annotations pertaining to patents. Note the single patent line between Sections 15 and 16. A patent line is drawn around every piece of ground for the lands described in the patent. When two patented areas join, there is a double-weight patent line, as appears in the middle of Section 15. The patent number always appears in the lower extremity of the area patented. If there is no patent number, the land is vacant public domain. Note the SW 1/4 NE 1/4, SE 1/4 NW 1/4, NE 1/4 SW 1/4, NW 1/4 SE 1/4 of Section 14, which is unpatented federal land.

Since October 21, 1976, a mineral claimant must advise the United States, by filing with the Bureau of Land Management a copy of the location certificate and a map showing the location of the claim. However, if an official mineral survey has not been made for the unpatented location, it does not appear on the title records. Only those included in approved mineral surveys appear, such as MS 1150 in Section 7. The weight of the line for MS 1150 is survey weight. If a patent has been issued describing a claim, the MS number is replaced with the patent number and a patent weight line replaces the survey weight line, such as you see for Patent Number 636280 in Section 7.

Whenever there are any reservations to the United States, a notation will appear below the patent number. If there is no annotation below the patent number, the United States reserved nothing. The patent numbers and reservation annotations appearing for the patented areas outlined in Section 13, 14, 15 and 24 are examples of the various types of reservations which can occur.

The United States occasionally purchases lands which have been previously patented. Such land is referred to as acquired land and, where the State Office has the acquisition information, such acquired lands are shaded as shown in Section 25 through Section 30. The fact that an area is shaded indicates that the United States may have an acquired surface interest or an acquired mineral interest, or both. Exactly what was acquired and is presently owned by the United States may be determined by a reading of the annotations for the land under consideration.

For the most part, land which is shaded will carry annotations such as those appearing in Sections 28 and 29; in both cases the surface is owned by the United States. The United States also owns the minerals in both sections; but those originally retained, as in Section 28, are subject to disposition under one law, and those acquired, as in Section 29, are subject to disposition under a different law. Thus, the records are designed to show both the surface and the mineral estate, plus the nature of the mineral estate.

The annotation in Section 25 tells us the United States does not own the surface, but has an acquired mineral interest; hence the shading. The same is true in Section 27. In Section 26, the shading applies to surface only.

It should be emphasized that the State Office may not have information concerning land which has been acquired by the Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Reclamation, now the Water and Power Resources Service, or any other Federal agency which still exercises jurisdiction over the land. However, with a specific description of the lands in question, the State Office can find the exact status.

The right-of-way symbols appearing in Section 31 should not appear on anything except Bureau of Land Management administered land, except in those cases where the right-of-way was in effect before the land was patented. In such cases, the patent was issued subject to the right-of-way.

Use Plat

As mentioned previously, the records make a provision for a Use Plat on which are shown the uses (grazing leases excepted) which are made of Federal land. The broken lines appearing in Sections 16, 17, 20 and 21 are lines which indicate use such as oil or gas lease, coal licenses or leases, etc. These records do not show grazing leases. This information must be obtained from BLM District Offices or Resource Area Headquarters.

Historical Index

The Historical Index is a chronological narrative of all past and present actions which affect the use of or title to public lands and resources. The Historical Index can be used to check title, but it was not designed for that purpose, nor is it necessary for use in making title determinations. The primary value of the Historical Index is its adaptability for abstract work. This record is maintained in the State Office public room, which is open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., each working day.

Procedure For Using Master Title Plat

As stated in the forepart of this discussion, the records are designed to convey the title story by use of lines and abbreviated annotations for those lines. The guides, listed below, if followed in each case, should help in making the records quite easy to read.

1. Always follow a line around until you come back to the point of beginning. The area within the bounds of the line is the land affected.
2. To help in finding the annotation for a particular line, know what the line stands for. The legend of abbreviations and symbols tells you the information conveyed by the different lines.
3. The annotation for the area circumscribed by a line always appears at the lower extremity of the area involved. In areas of congested title information, it is very common to see the annotation outside of the land area in question. However, this annotation is always arrowed in to the area affected. The legend of abbreviation gives the full wording for an abbreviated annotation.
4. The plats are on a scale of 30 chains to the inch. Whenever the situation exists where this scale is too small to adequately tell the story, a supplemental plat, on a scale of 10 or 15 chains to the inch, is prepared. Normally, never more than 4 sections appear on a supplemental plat. The township plat always says "See Supplemental Plat", if one has been made. Where there is a supplemental plat, the main township plat does not carry any title information for the sections concerned. Such information appears on the supplemental plat only.

The title information appearing on the Master Title Plat was taken from microfilm copies of the documents themselves, and these microfilms are now in the Montana State Office. We can, at any time, furnish a copy of any document which appears on the records. This consists of patents, withdrawal orders, state selection lists, etc. If there are questions concerning the Master Title Plats, if additional information is required, or if copies of the above mentioned documents are needed, we hope you will not hesitate to address an inquiry to: Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 36800, Billings, Montana 59107.

MAP SYMBOLS FOR LAND STATUS RECORDS

WITHDRAWALS	PIPE LINE OR CONDUIT
PATENTS	CANAL OR DITCH
LEASES	FENCE
PL 167 DETERMINATION AREA	ACQUIRED LANDS
LIMITS OF SURVEYED LAND (HATCHING ON UNSURVEYED SIDE)	CEMETERY
RAILROAD	HISTORIC RUINS
RAILROAD STATIONGROUNDS	RIVER AND ISLAND
TELEPHONE LINE	STREAM
POWER TRANSMISSION LINE	LAKE AND ISLAND
HIGHWAYS, ROADS	RESERVOIR
TRAIL	SPRING
MATERIAL SITES	WATER WELL
RADIO STATION	WATER WELL (WITH TROUGH AND STORAGE)
	CORRIDOR (R/W's)