Waterhole fence dispute results in rancher’s arrest

By PAULINE BRAYMEN
The Times-Herald

1964 by the Department of Interior BLM in a cooperative project with the refuge to provide water for cattle grazing on the adjoining BLM grazing allotment. The boundary fence was kept cattle away from the riparian area along the Blitzen River. The Hammonds acquired the BLM allotment acquiring the refuge in a land exchange with the BLM a couple of years ago. They traded land they owned on Steens Mountain for the property. They want the right to water their cattle from the waterhole to continue.

The refuge management has been rebuilding boundary fences to protect the riparian boundaries of the property for several years.

Whereas old boundary fences followed natural topographical features for the convenience of the movement of people, livestock, and wildlife, the new boundary fence is being built on the true survey line.

The Hammonds do not question the property boundary, but they do question the Fish and Wildlife Service’s right to force their livestocks away from historically used watering spots.

And they do question being cut off from access to their ranch fields by refuge fences.

Their ranch lies at the base of Steens Mountain in an ungrazed glass configuration inside refuge boundaries.

The Hammonds have cut fences in order to move their cattle, they claim. The Refuge Service gates were made available.

The Hammonds grazing and buying permits were terminated by the Refuge Manager Forrest Coonan in March. The order cited destruction of property, trespassing cattle, and making threats to refuge employees as reasons for the termination.

Photo by PAULINE BRAYMEN

Dispute over this waterhole on the edge of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge ended in arrest of Harney County Rancher.
How Much Are We Going To Take?

Plan To Attend The Harney County Citizen’s Rights Rally

Wednesday, August 10th
5:30 p.m.
Harney County Senior Center

Guest Speaker
• Chuck Cushman •

Of The American Land Rights Association

We urge everyone who cherishes their freedom, or who deals with Government Bureaucracy to attend this important rally.

A FUND HAS BEEN SET UP AT THE U.S. BANK TO HELP DEFRAY THE LEGAL EXPENSES OF THE HAMMONDS.

The following individuals have called in support of the Hammonds in this endeavor:

Kenneth Bentz
Blake Nuffer
Russell & Deby Hammond
Bruce Pickthorne
Paulette Pyle
The Davis Family
Marlin Davies
The Bailey Family
Bruce Abide
Nate Hammond
Ken Bentz
Fred Otley
VJ Labor
Jack Lowry
The McLean Family
Lynn Dequirez
Scott Franklin
Pat O’Toole
Arlene & Clyde Miller
Ken Thompson
Sharar Beck
Buck Taylor
Jim Bentz
Mike Morgan
Rich Hubbard
Jack McLester
Mac Berkmeyer
Allen & Jen Otley
Evelyn Zurfluh
Ferry Williams
Dan Downey
Pat & Patti Allison
Steven & Earilyn Hammond
Mark & Susan Doverspike
Mark & Deby Smith
Dave & Mary Stoddard
Koren Taylor
Vern Scheun
Pat & Joyce Wheeler
Van Becker
Rich Hubbard
Leonard Wecchino
Brett Wolf
Brian Bower
Doug Bailey
Southern Mining Association
John Potter
Judy Whartman
Snow Mountain Pine Ltd.
Dan Nichols
Gary Miller
Jerry Santille
Nevia Thompson
Lyn Aker
Ed Aker
Larry Dunn

Brian Dunn
Larry & John Swain
Molena Konk
Mervin Whartan
Carol Temple
Donna Thomas
Glenn & Sheree Harris
Gary Marshall
Joe & Helen Hadwick
Gary & Arle Oster
Mike & Betty Morgan
Helen Cowan

I direct this letter to the Free Citizens of Harney County, of Oregon, and the United States. I say, “Free Citizens” wondering if there are really any left (out there.)

By now you have heard of the events of the past week, concerning Dwight Hammond’s dispute with the Malheur Wildlife Refuge. Now, here is a man who, at least, thinks he is a free citizen. This man dared to stand up to the Federal Government, and for that they would punish him.

It makes me wonder who is next? Will it come to be that anyone who takes a stand will be victimized? Are we to cower with fear in the shadow of Big Government? Is this our country? any more? Does this Government still belong to the people? Big Government is creeping into every facet of our lives, from how we raise our children, to how we can make a living. How much are we going to take?

I feel this has all gone too far. It’s time to wake up, people take a stand, make yourselves heard. If you don’t think they’re listening, yell a little louder.

A movement has begun in support of Dwight Hammond. A small flicker of hope for us all. We need your help. We need every man, woman, and child to stand up and send a clear message to our government. Remind them why they work for. Let them know we’re not alone.

Let’s make certain we are “Free Citizens.” Free to make our own choices for our communities, schools, businesses, and families. Please give your support. Let’s fan this flicker into a flame.

Sincerely,
David A. Stoddart