

The help of agencies outside the tribe will be critical to the development of the Hopi agricultural future.

The Hopi Vision

BY JAN MCCOY

The Hopi Tribe is looking toward development of agriculture, new communities and recreation on land they have been fighting for more than a century to regain from the Navajo Nation.

Arnold Taylor Sr., has been overseeing the plans since becoming manager of the tribe's department of natural resources in April 1989. Taylor received a bachelor's degree in agriculture from The University of Arizona College of Agriculture in 1973.

"Until now, there's not been much done on our land as far as agriculture is concerned," Taylor says. "The impetus to do this has always been there; it's just taken the right people to start it. The Hopis are known to be farmers, but somewhere along the way we lost that heart of the Hopis as we became modernized."

The Hopi reservation was created in 1882 through an executive order signed by President Chester Arthur that gave the Hopis 2.5 million acres of land in what now is eastern Coconino and northern Navajo counties. At that time, about 300 Navajos lived within the Hopi reservation boundaries. But because of the numbers of Navajos occupying public land, the U.S. government began to expand the boundaries of the original Navajo reservation. The Navajo reservation was established on 3.5 million acres in northwest New Mexico and northeastern Arizona in 1868. Continued Navajo expansion resulted in today's reservation now totaling more than 16 million acres of land in Arizona,

New Mexico, Colorado and Utah.

Since 1943, the Hopi Tribe has lived within the 650,013 acres of Land Management District 6. The district was set aside for exclusive Hopi use by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs as a result of the Indian Reorganization Act and Navajo expansion.

After nearly 100 years of protest over Navajo encroachment on their land, the Hopis finally appealed to the U.S. Congress in 1958. Congress authorized a lawsuit designed to determine ownership of that part of the Hopi reservation occupied by Navajos.

In 1962, the Court ruled the "Navajos had squatted on Hopi lands, and because the Secretary of Interior had never taken any action to remove them, they had acquired 'squatters' rights' to a one-half interest in the Hopi Reservation. . . ." In 1974, Congress passed legislation providing for a settlement of the differences between the Hopis and Navajos.

The agreement gave the Navajos 911,000 acres of Hopi land, and later in 1980, 400,000 acres of public land for relocation. The federal government also has supplied millions of dollars in direct relocation aid to the Navajos. Hopi land now totals 1.5 million acres. Final settlement of the agreement still is in progress.

Although the Hopis have yet to recover much of their land, it is being turned over to them gradually by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs.

"There are Navajos still living in those areas awaiting relocation,"

Taylor says. "When they leave, these areas will be turned over to us, but during this period we are still working to bring the ranges up to par."

These include ranges overgrazed by Navajo animals, and those in their own Hopi District 6, which, Taylor says, a BIA survey reports is 200 percent overgrazed.

Taylor says he has been drawing on a group of old friends from UA Cooperative Extension for help with the range restoration. He says Bob Racicot, the Navajo County director, has lent invaluable assistance to the Hopi Tribe.

But it's just the beginning.

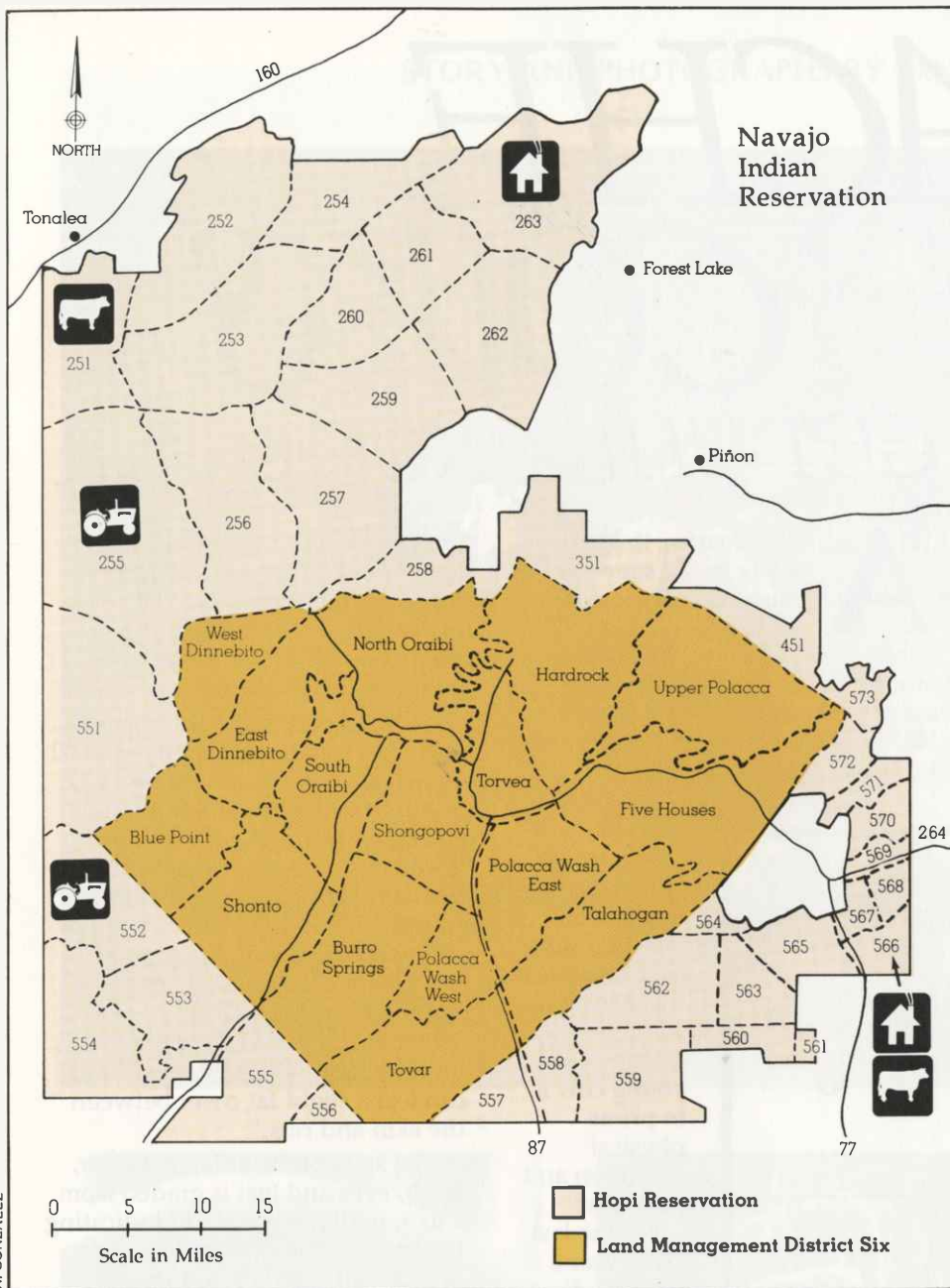
Taylor says one project that may start as early as this spring, is development of a 200- to 250-acre test plot near the northwest corner of the reservation (range unit No. 255). The agricultural development project will be a cooperative, with individual farmers growing from five to 25 acres of various products.

"There's already a well there that was drilled by the BIA about five years ago," Taylor says. "We've had a soil analysis done for the whole area and we know it would support a good agricultural program."

Taylor says the cool climate of the area will support apple and peach orchards, and alfalfa fields. Corn and beans already grow well there.

The first priority of any Hopi agricultural program, Taylor says, is to help supply food and feed for the tribe. He says the Hopis must now travel to Winslow, Flagstaff, or Gallup, N. M., for supplies.

Another site in the southwest corner of the reservation also is



-  Sire Pastures
-  Planned Communities
-  Agricultural Developments

and No. 566) have been approved by the Hopi Resources Committee for use as permanent sire pastures. A third area also is being considered. Taylor says the plan is a move to educate Hopi cattle owners in successful livestock management techniques.

"We're also trying to make sure all the individual operators join one of our three cattle associations, or even form another," he says. "It's a good practice because it's pretty expensive if you have to operate by yourself."

Five areas show great promise for development of wildlife habitats from which income might be generated through hunting and recreational-use permits.

The help of agencies outside the tribe will be critical to the development of the Hopi agricultural future, Taylor predicts. He has been calling on UA College of Agriculture administrators and the heads of other state agencies to request assistance in their areas of expertise.

"We know we can't do this all by ourselves," he says. "Fortunately, I got my education through this system, and I know the assistance is there."

It's an exciting time for Taylor. "There are just so many opportunities out here," he says. "I love my job."

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being considered for agricultural development (range unit No. 552). The site also has an existing well.

"We've still got some Navajos in this area," Taylor says. "These Navajos have demonstration plots there established by an Israeli consultant who was impressed with the land. We've got a more elaborate plan for that area, but we'll have to deal with that later."

Many members of the tribe also must travel long distances to work at the Black Mesa and Kayenta mines the Hopis co-own with the Navajos. About 80 percent of the Hopi Tribe's income now comes

from the mines, Taylor says. The tribe plans to develop two new communities, one on the northern end of the reservation for easier access to the mines, and the other in the eastern corner of the reservation.

While most of the tribal members still live within District 6 boundaries, Hopi planners are hoping the new developments will encourage members to relocate from the district into the newly acquired land.

Two areas on the northwest and southeast corners of the Hopi reservation (range units No. 251

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