

High Country News

Land-Grab Universities: User Guide Remaining Acres of Morrill Act of 1862 Indigenous Land Parcels Database

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Citation
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Unis_Remaining_Acreage_Summaries_8_14_20.xlsx

Overview

This document describes the contents of the Remaining acres of Morrill Act of 1862 Indigenous Land Parcels database contained in the file Unis_Remaining_Acreage_Summaries_8_14_20.xlsx

The database is the product of a *High Country News* investigation that found that 16 (nearly a third) of all U.S. land-grant universities have retained over half a million acres of the Indigenous lands that were expropriated and redistributed by the Morrill Act of 1862, lands that generated nearly \$13 million in revenue during fiscal year 2019.

It accompanies and builds off the “Morrill Act of 1862 Indigenous Land Parcels Database” from a previous *High Country News* investigation, which located more than 99% of the acres distributed through the Morrill Act of 1862 (or in lieu thereof), identified their original Indigenous inhabitants and caretakers, and researched the principal raised from their sale in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The database reconstructs approximately 10.7 million acres taken from nearly 250 tribes, bands and communities through over 160 violence-backed land cessions.

This database of the remaining Morrill Act acreage was created through research and interviews conducted with universities, state land departments, public-lands commissioners, and other land and resource offices. The research is designed to identify the universities that still own Morrill Act acres and benefits. Our reporting only established revenue from fiscal year 2019, but it’s important to note that these surface and mineral acres have been in the possession of states for the benefit of land-grant universities since their founding. Reviewing more than 100 years of revenue reports held by various state departments and universities was beyond the scope of this project,

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but it may provide additional insight on how land-grant universities have profited from expropriated Indigenous lands.

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Citation

If you re-publish this data or otherwise draw on it as a source for publication, in part or whole, cite as:

Robert Lee, Tristan Ahtone, Kalen Goodluck, “Morrill Act of 1862, 2019 Remaining Acres and Income,” *High Country News*, August 2020.

File Descriptions

The database comprises one Excel spreadsheet. Descriptions of the column contents appear below.

Excel file: **Unis_Remaining_Acreage_Summaries_8_14_20.xlsx**

This file contains data on acreage redistributed by the Morrill Act still retained by their respective land-grant universities across 14 columns. The file contains the following columns:

University

The current university beneficiary, or beneficiaries, of the endowment generated from the land grant that contained this parcel.

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LG_State

The postal code of the state that was granted this parcel for the benefit of a land-grant university.

City

The current city of the university beneficiary or other state beneficiaries of the endowment generated from the land this parcel was contained in.

GrantType

Type of land grant received by the state. “Scrip” means the state got vouchers (i.e. “scrip”) for the selection of parcels anywhere on the surveyed public domain. “Land” signifies the state-selected public-domain parcels inside its boundaries.

Total_Morrill_Acres_Found

The number of physical acres found in the state’s grant that were summed from the Parcels.csv.

Adjusted_Endow_Raised_1914

The endowment principal raised from the sale of the state’s grant by 1914 (*Endow_Raised_1914*) multiplied by the share of the endowment assigned to the university (*Benefit_Share*).

Remaining_SurfaceAcres

The number of physical surface acres still retained by the state or beneficiary university.

FY19_TotalSurfaceRoyalties

The total number of monies (U.S. dollars) generated by the physical surface acres still retained by the state or beneficiary university for fiscal year 2019.

Remaining_MineralAcres

The number of physical mineral acres still retained by the state or beneficiary university.

FY19_TotalMineralRoyalties

The total number of monies (U.S. dollars) generated by the physical surface acres still retained by the state or beneficiary university for fiscal year 2019.

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Perc_Remain_SurfaceAcres

The percentage of physical surface acres remaining from the original land granted to state or beneficiary university.

Perc_Remain_MineralAcres

The percentage of physical mineral acres remaining from the original land granted state or beneficiary university.

Retention_Notes

Explanation for the retention, use and revenue generated from any of the remaining surface acres or mineral acres originally granted to the state for the beneficiary university.

Retention_Notes_Source

The source(s) used to compose the Retention_Notes field.