

# A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO FEDERAL LAND

AND WHY YOU SHOULD CARE ABOUT IT

## What is Federal Land?

In the United States, all land is ultimately controlled by some government department. Even the land around your house is subject to government control. The job of managing this land is split between the local, state, and federal levels of government.

When we talk about "Federal Land," we are referring to land that is under the direct control and management of the federal government. This type of land, even though it is physically located within state borders, is not subject to state government control or laws. This effectively gives complete control of the land to the federal government.

## How is it Used?

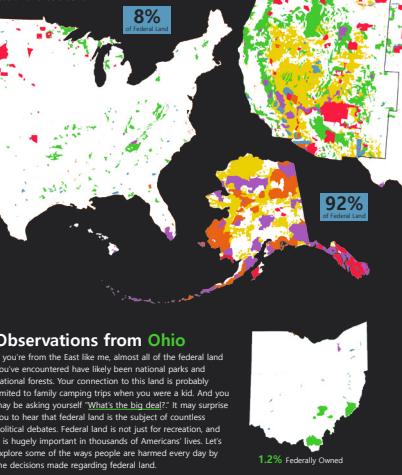
Federal land is used for all sorts of things. Some of it is used for national parks like Yellowstone or the Grand Canyon. Some of it is sold to mining and logging companies to produce resources. It forms the reservations that native populations are banned to. Most of the land goes to agriculture, with both crops and livestock using the land to grow.



**Fun Fact:**  
In 2019 the US government made **4.2 billion dollars** from renting federal land to oil and natural gas companies.

## Where is all this Land?

While there is some federal land in every state, the distribution is far from equal. The western states contain 92% of all federal land, but only make up 49% of the country's area. This East vs. West disparity leads to a lot of conflicting ideas about how federal land should be run.



**Observations from Ohio**  
If you're from the East like me, almost all of the federal land you've encountered have likely been national parks and national forests. Your connection to this land is probably limited to family camping trips when you were a kid. And you may be asking yourself "What's the big deal?" It may surprise you to hear that federal land is the subject of countless political debates. Federal land is not just for recreation, and it is hugely important in thousands of Americans' lives. Let's explore some of the ways people are harmed every day by the decisions made regarding federal land.

**Fun Fact:**  
Ohio State University is a "Land Grant" university, meaning it was funded through the donation of federal land from the federal government. The land in this deal was acquired by forcing out members of over 250 tribes who had lived on the land for centuries.

## No State Nevada

Moving to Nevada? Finding a place to live might shock you. Despite having over 70 million acres of land, the government owns most of it, leaving just 14 million acres for residents. This false land shortage is driving up rent and pricing many Nevadans out of the housing market, while opening the land to for profit companies to extract its resources.



**Fun Fact:**  
The US government used this land when setting off 928 nuclear bombs, which studies have linked to over 10,000 cases of thyroid cancer and countless deaths.

## Atrophying Alaska

The federal government's practice of selling land to logging, mining, and oil companies in Alaska poses a significant risk to the state's land, and there is little Alaska can do about it. These ongoing risks include:

Tongass National Forest - 9.2 million acres  
Arctic National Wildlife Refuge - 1.6 million acres  
Lands Package - 448,000 acres  
National Petroleum Reserve - 13.35 million acres  
Public Land Orders - 1.5 million acres  
Bering Sea Western Interior - 1.8 million acres  
Izembek National Wildlife Refuge - 417,500 acres

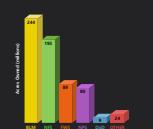
**Fun Fact:**  
The Mining Law of 1872, still in effect, allows mining companies to pay less than \$5 per acre to open a mine on federal land. The average cost of an acre of private land in Alaska is \$15,753.

## Sources & Further Reading

A Vast Liquidation of Public Lands Is Underway in Alaska  
Arctic National Wildlife Refuge 101  
Federal Land Ownership: Overview and Data  
How Federal Policy Prices Nevadans Out of Housing  
Interactive: See the Lands Sold to Fund Ohio's Land "Grant" Universities  
Multinational Mining Corporations Are Exploiting U.S. Taxpayers  
The Mining Law of 1872: Digging a Little Deeper  
Revenues and Disbursements from Oil and Natural Gas Production on Federal Lands

## Who's in Charge?

There are a ton of agencies that manage federal land, but there are five main players:



**Bureau of Land Management**  
The BLM manages a wide range of activities, including mining, grazing, and outdoor recreation. They do it all.

**National Forest Service**  
The NFS is in charge of the forests grasslands, using them for timber harvesting, grazing, and recreation.

**National Parks Service**  
The NPS runs all the country's national parks, monuments, and historic sites.

**Department of Defense**  
The DoD has federal land in the form of military facilities and storage.

**Other**  
Includes the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Energy, the Tennessee Valley Association, NASA, National Science Foundation, and more.

**Fun Fact:**  
While the Bureau of Indian Affairs manages 55 million acres of federal land, they are largely omitted from this infographic, as the additional ownership of the tribes causes them to be a whole other issue that deserves its own exploration.

# PROJECT 1

# modular

# Infographic

*Developing a scrolling infographic that can be broken down into smaller modules to be shared on social media*

**RYAN KUSTBORDER**



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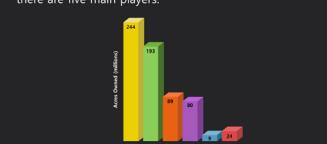
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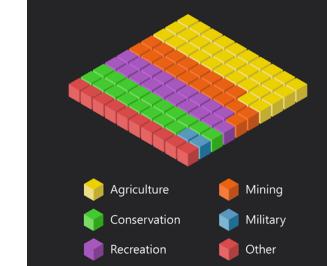
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# SKETCHES

Planning for this project occurred in three phases. First, I did some broad research into federal land so that I could start to get an idea of the story I wanted to tell. Then I started to develop some outlines for this narrative so that I could get a sense of what types of sections I would be needing. Then I did some thumbnail sketches for different layouts and individual components like maps and charts that I thought I might want to include in the infographics.

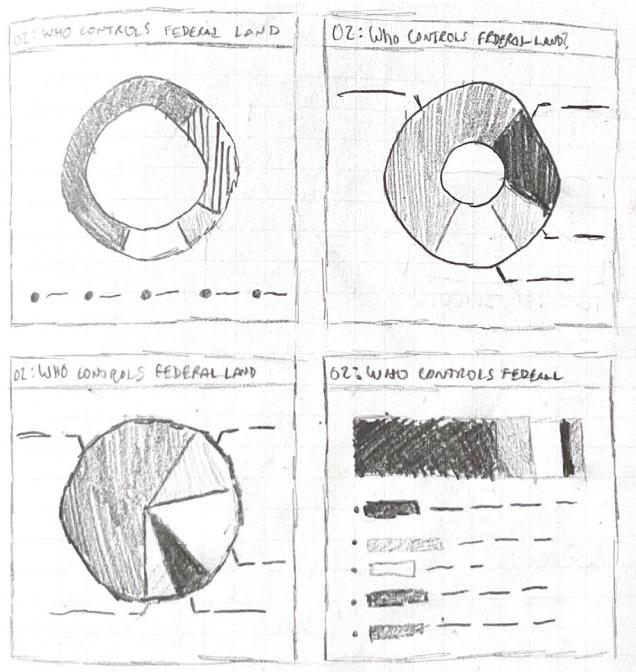
Béla Bollobás *\*GOOD CLARIFICATION OF PURPOSE  
"FEDERAL LAND IS AN ISSUE  
THAT AFFECTS A MINORITY, BUT  
IS CONTROLLED BY THE MAJORITY"*

- ① BRIEF PRIMER
- ② EAST COAST ← VIEW AS NATIONAL PARKS OR TVA
- ③ WEST COAST ← EVERYWHERE, CALIFORNIA COAST
- ④ ALASKA ← FISH + WILDLIFE SERVICES
- ⑤ HOW IS IT USED ← CONSERVATION/RESOURCE PARADOX
- ⑥ WHO CONTROLS IT ← IS THIS INTERESTING?

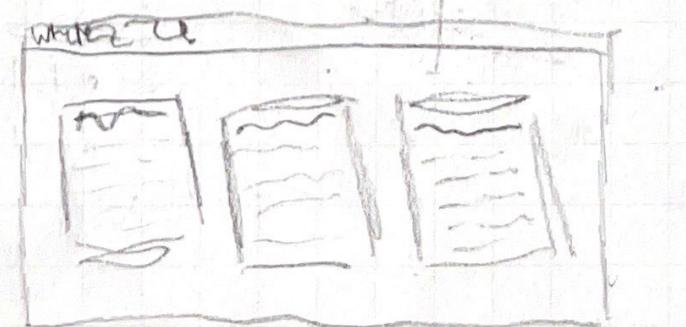
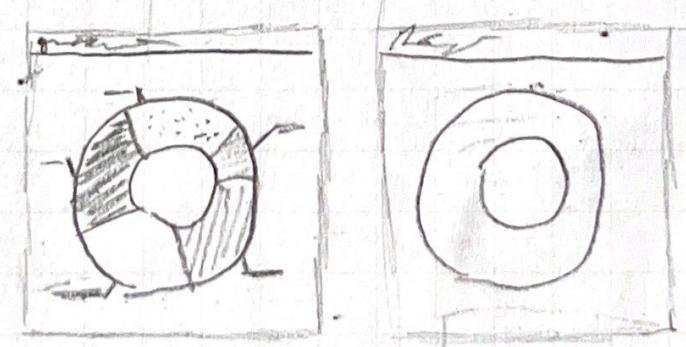
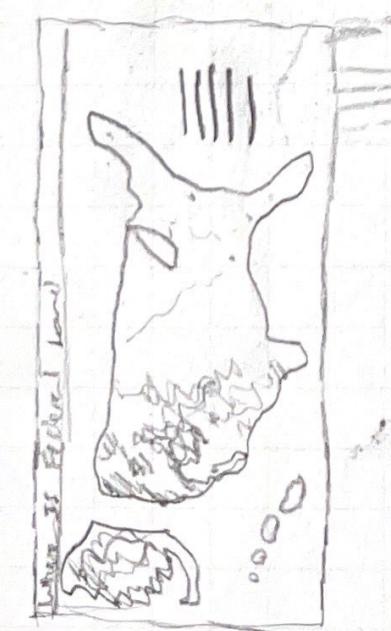
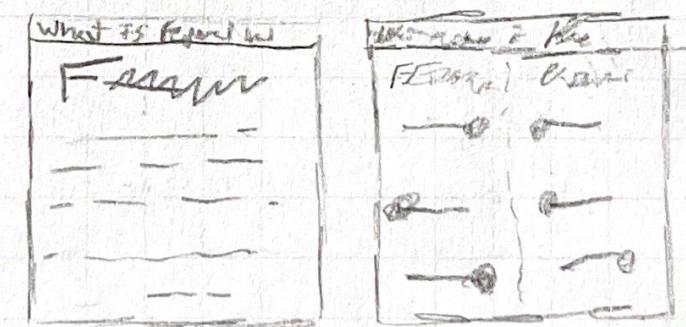
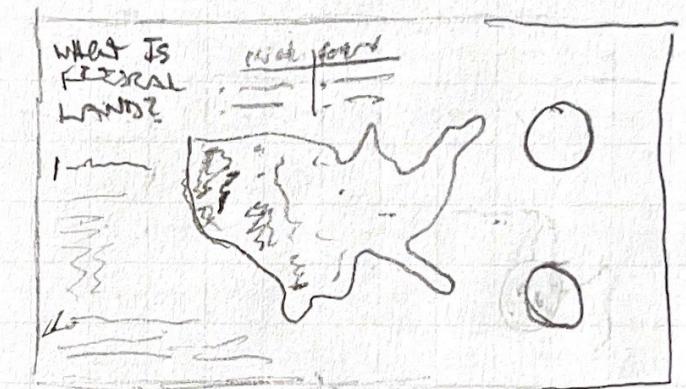
OR

- ① PRIMER
- ② EAST
- ③ WEST
- ④ ALASKA / NEVADA? *ABN* *WHY* *USE* *WHY DO I CARE* *NEED TO PUT IN THE WHI SECTION* *CONCLUSION?* *ANECHOTES* *NEVADA NUKES* *ALASKAN FISHING* *NO LAND OHIO*
- ⑤ HOW IS USED
- ⑥ IMPORTANCE/DEBATES

23



AFT 343 PI MODULAR INFOGRAPHIC



# FULL INFOGRAPHIC - FIRST DRAFT

For my first draft I wanted to focus on content and a very general layout. I wrote up paragraphs for each section, which allowed me to start seeing the different sections that would be needed.

## FEDERAL LAND

### What is Federal Land?

Federal land is an important part of our country's landscape, covering over 640 million acres of land across the United States. This vast expanse of public lands includes national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and other areas that are managed by various federal agencies. In this infographic, we'll explore some of the key facts and figures about federal land, including its history, management, and ecological significance. Join us as we delve into the fascinating world of federal land and discover how these lands play a vital role in our nation.

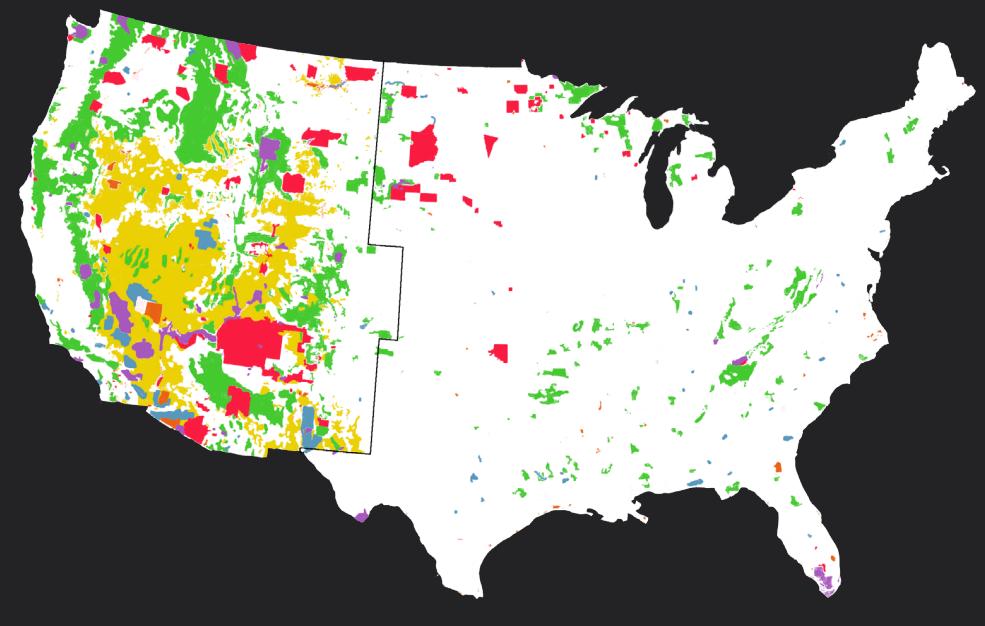
### How is Federal Land Different

**Ownership:** The most significant difference between federal land and non-federal land is ownership. Federal land is owned by the government and directly controlled by the executive branch.

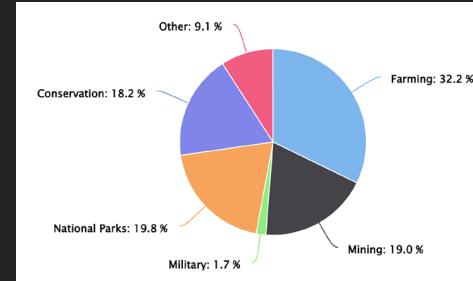
**Access:** Access to federal land is typically more restricted than non-federal land. Federal lands often have specific rules and regulations for activities such as hunting, fishing, and camping. In some cases, permits or fees may be required to access federal land.

### Where is Federal Land?

Federal land is found throughout the United States, but its distribution is uneven. In the Eastern US, federal land covers only about 4% of the region's land area, mostly in the Appalachian Mountains. In contrast, federal land covers over half of the land area in the Western US, including iconic parks like Yellowstone and Yosemite.



### How is Federal Land Used?



I can't write this section ahhhhh

### Who Controls Federal Land?

Bureau of Land Management - responsible for managing a wide range of activities on federal land, including mining, grazing, and outdoor recreation

National Forest Service - manages forest lands for multiple uses, including timber harvesting, grazing, and recreation, while also protecting wildlife and preserving natural resources

National Parks Service - responsible for managing the country's national parks, monuments, and historic sites.

US Fish and Wildlife Service - responsible for managing federal land that is critical to wildlife conservation, including national wildlife refuges, fish hatcheries, and other protected areas.

Department of Defense - responsible for maintaining military sites

### What are the Challenges with Federal Land?

# FULL INFOGRAPHIC - SECOND DRAFT

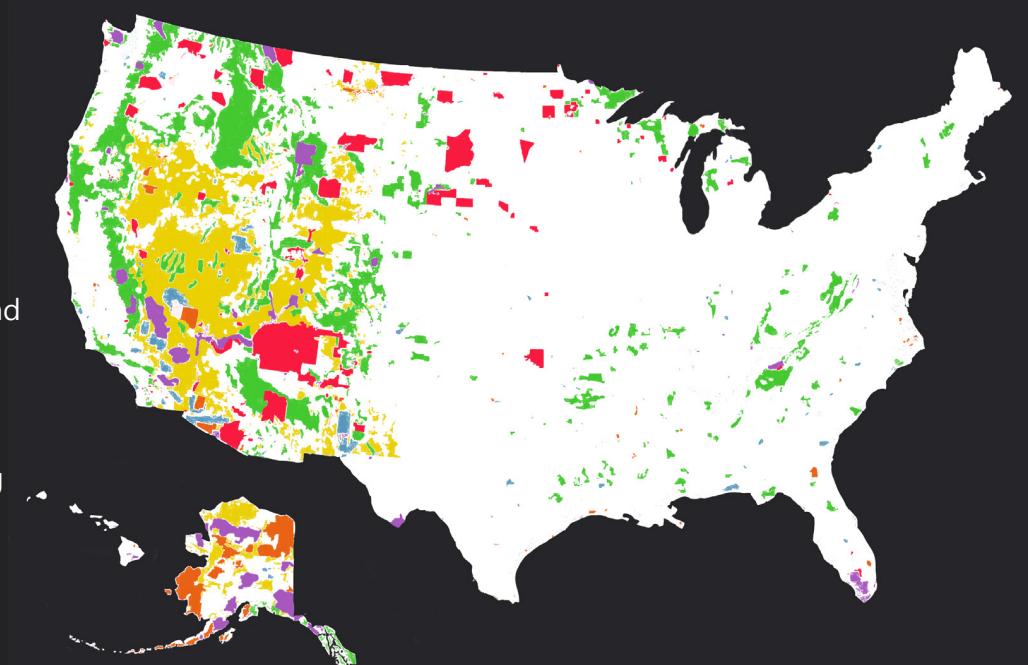
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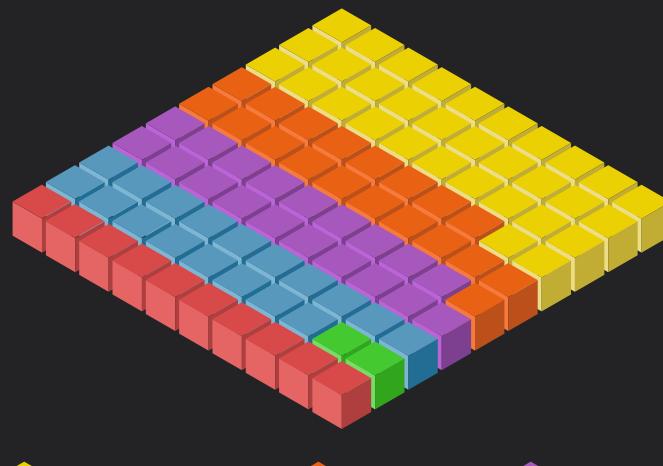
#### Ownership

The most significant difference between federal land and non-federal land is ownership. Federal land is owned by the government and directly controlled by the executive branch.

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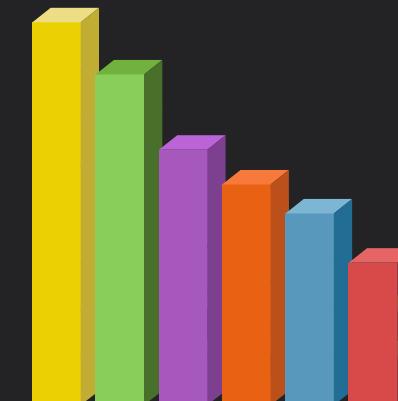
Federal land is typically more restricted than non-federal land. Federal lands often have specific rules and regulations for activities such as hunting, fishing, and camping. In some cases, permits or fees may be required to access federal land.

### How is Federal Land Used?



Legend:  
Yellow: Farming  
Orange: Mining  
Purple: National Parks  
Blue: Conservation  
Green: Military  
Red: Other

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**Department of Defense**  
responsible for maintaining military sites

Next I wanted to explore the aesthetic that I wanted to go for. I knew that I wanted to use only a few colors and keep a pretty simple and clean layout. I also wanted to try out how well the charts and maps would catch the reader's attention.

# FULL INFOGRAPHIC - THIRD DRAFT

For this draft we were challenged to focus on our narrative and making sure that the information was compelling, not just visually interesting. Upon analysis of my own narrative, I found that it was quite boring and impersonal, which are not feelings you want in political discussions. So I reworked the sections, adding in more concrete examples and human stories. This resulted in a much more cohesive story which is more likely to convince people of the need for change.

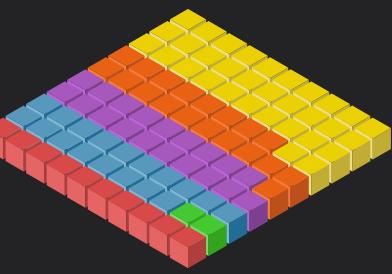
## A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO **FEDERAL LAND** AND WHY YOU SHOULD CARE ABOUT IT

### What is Federal Land? Who's in Charge?

Federal Land is simply just the land in the United States which is still owned by the federal government and not the state governments. The federal government essentially has total control over what happens on these lands, which can lead to serious negative impacts.

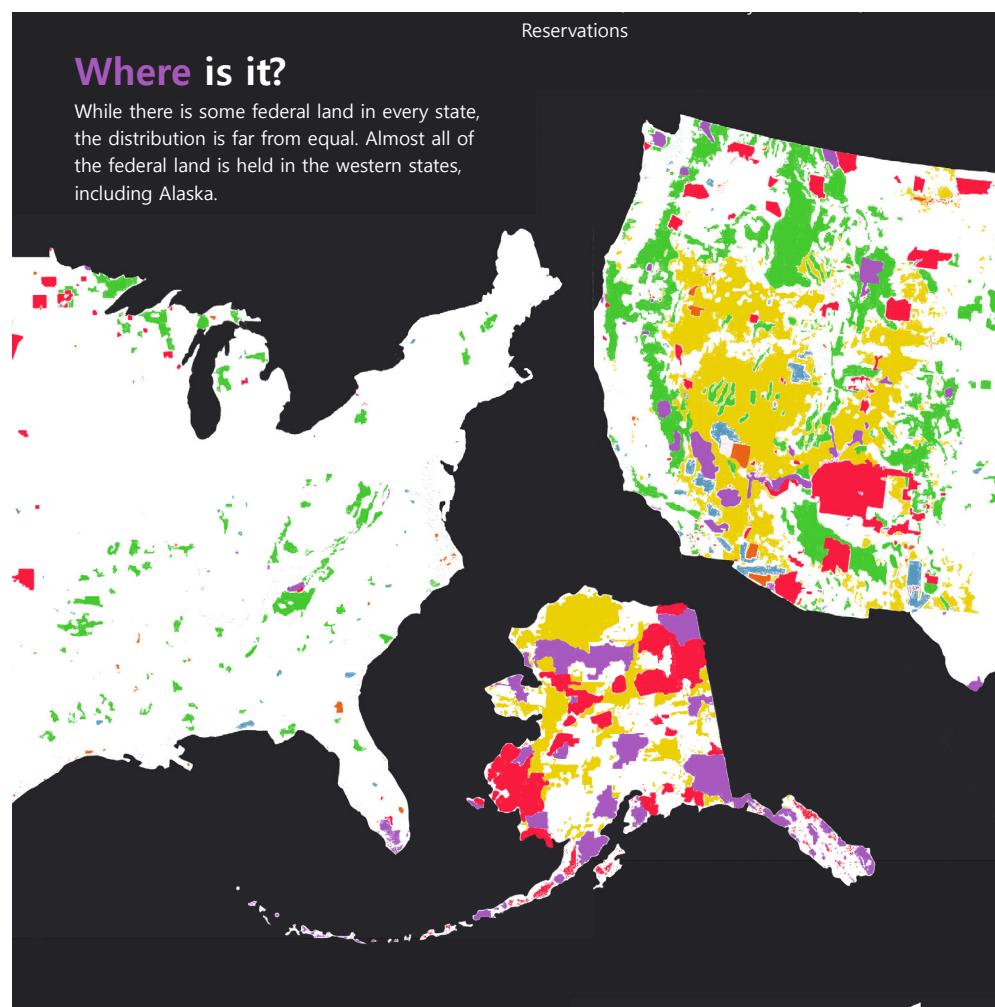
### How is it Used?

While National Parks and Forests are likely the type of federal land you are most familiar with, the majority of federal land is used for resources such as agriculture, mining, and timber.



Category	Acres
Farming	244,391,312
Mining	192,948,059
Conservation	79,972,531
Military	89,230,772
National Parks	8,921,349
Other	417,500

**Fun Fact:** The US government made 4.2 billion dollars from renting federal land to oil and natural gas companies in 2019.



### Observations from Ohio

If you're from the East like me, almost all of the federal land you've encountered have likely been national parks and national forests. Your connection to this land is probably limited to family camping trips when you were a kid. And you may be asking yourself "What's the big deal?" It may surprise you to hear that federal land is the subject of countless political debates. Federal land is not just for recreation, and it is hugely important in thousands of Americans' lives. Let's explore some of the ways people are harmed every day by the decisions made regarding federal land.



**1.2% Federally Owned**

### No State Nevada

Moving to Nevada? Finding a place to live might shock you. Despite having over 70 million acres of land, the government owns most of it, leaving just 14 million acres for residents. This false land shortage is driving up rent and pricing many Nevadans out of the housing market.

**Fun Fact:** The US government used this land when setting off 928 nuclear bombs, which studies have linked to over 10,000 cases of thyroid cancer and countless deaths.

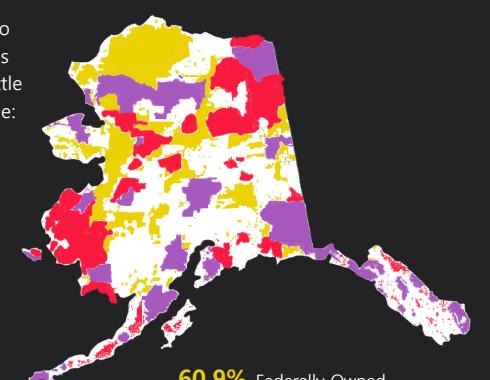


**80.1% Federally Owned**

### Atrophying Alaska

The federal government's practice of selling land to logging, mining, and oil companies in Alaska poses a significant risk to the state's land, and there is little Alaska can do about it. These ongoing risks include:

- Tongass National Forest - 9.2 million acres
- Arctic National Wildlife Refuge - 1.6 million acres
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- National Petroleum Reserve - 13.35 million acres
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- Bering Sea Western Interior - 1.8 million acres
- Izembek National Wildlife Refuge - 417,500 acres



**60.9% Federally Owned**

# MODULES - FIRST DRAFT

I then broke the full version up into individual modules that could be posted to social media. I was envisioning this going up on Twitter, which gave me flexibility with my dimensions and let me avoid the dreaded square aspect ratio from Instagram.

**What is Federal Land?**  
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Department of Defense  
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**Where is Federal Land?**  
While there is some federal land in every state, the distribution is far from equal. Almost all of the federal land is held in the western states, including Alaska.

**Observations in Ohio**  
If you live in an eastern state such as Ohio, almost all of the federal land near you are national parks and forests. You likely only really interact with federal land for recreation and family camping trips. Because of this, you may be asking yourself "Why should we care about who owns what park, they're the same trees either way." But this is not the case for those who live in the west. Federal land is so pervasive that it impacts pretty much every aspect of life. Let's explore some of the ways people are harmed every day by federal land use.

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# FULL INFOGRAPHIC - FOURTH DRAFT

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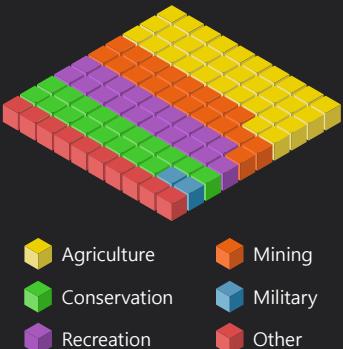
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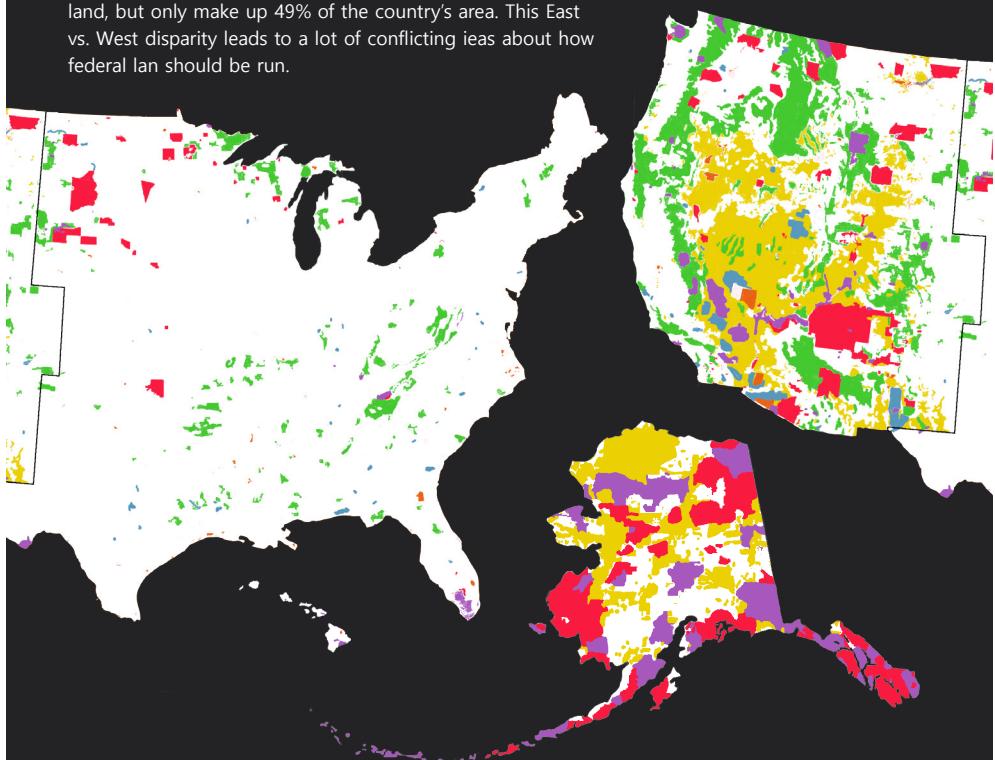
Sector	Acres Owned (millions)
Agriculture	244
Conservation	193
Mining	89
National Parks Service	80
Military	9
Department of Defense	24
Other	0

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Now that I had my narrative pretty much settled, I turned back to the visuals. I added some more hierarchy and smaller details. I cleaned up some of the maps and I added more anecdotes.

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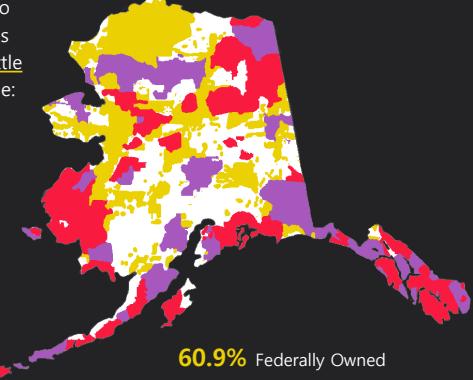


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# MODULES - SECOND DRAFT

## A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO FEDERAL LAND AND WHY YOU SHOULD CARE ABOUT IT

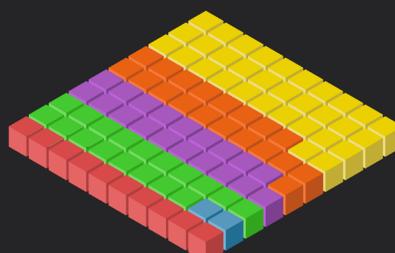
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### How is it Used?

Federal land is used for all sorts of things. Some of it is used for national parks like Yellowstone or the Grand Canyon. Some of it is sold to mining and logging companies to produce resources. It forms the reservations that native populations were banished to. Most of the land goes to agriculture, with both crops and livestock using the land to grow.



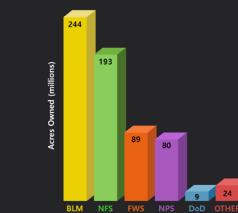
- Agriculture
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- Recreation
- Mining
- Military
- Other

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In 2019 the US government made **4.2 billion dollars** from renting federal land to oil and natural gas companies.

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There are a ton of agencies that manage federal land, but there are five main players:



#### Bureau of Land Management

The BLM manages a wide range of activities, including mining, grazing, and outdoor recreation. They do it all.

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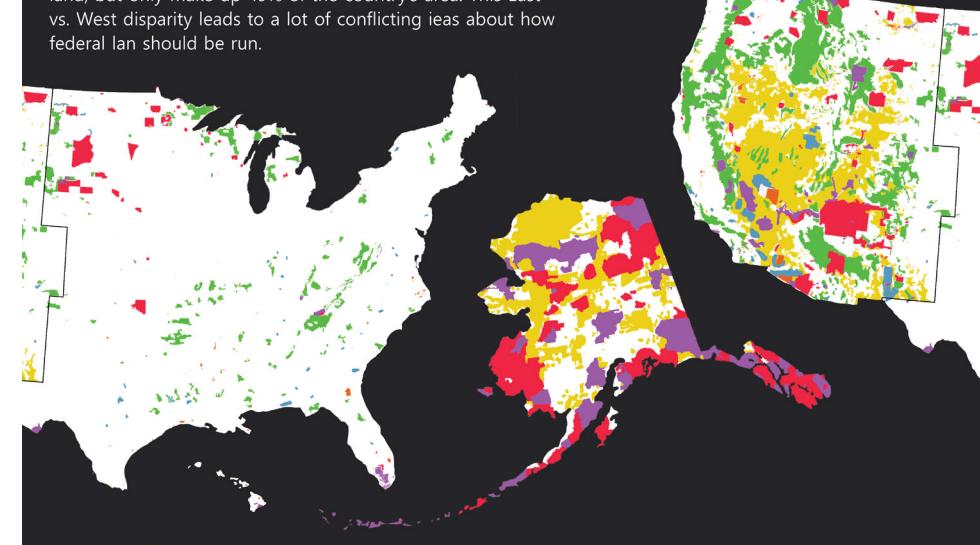
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I then brought all those improvements over to the modules. This is also when I considered the image size more deeply and realized that since these were going on Twitter, they did not have to all be the same size. By taking advantage of this feature, I created much more clean and organized layouts for each module.

### No State Nevada

Moving to Nevada? Finding a place to live might shock you. Despite having over 70 million acres of land, the government owns most of it, leaving just 14 million acres for residents. This false land shortage is driving up rent and pricing many Nevadans out of the housing market, while opening the land to for profit companies to extract its resources.

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The US government used this land when setting off **928 nuclear bombs**, which studies have linked to over 10,000 cases of thyroid cancer and countless deaths.

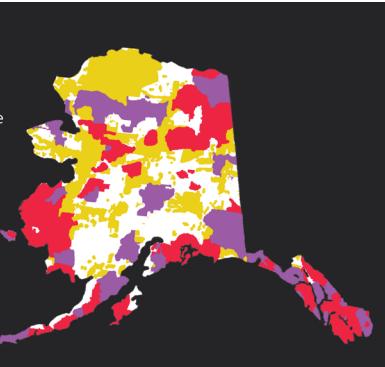
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# FULL INFOGRAPHIC - FINAL

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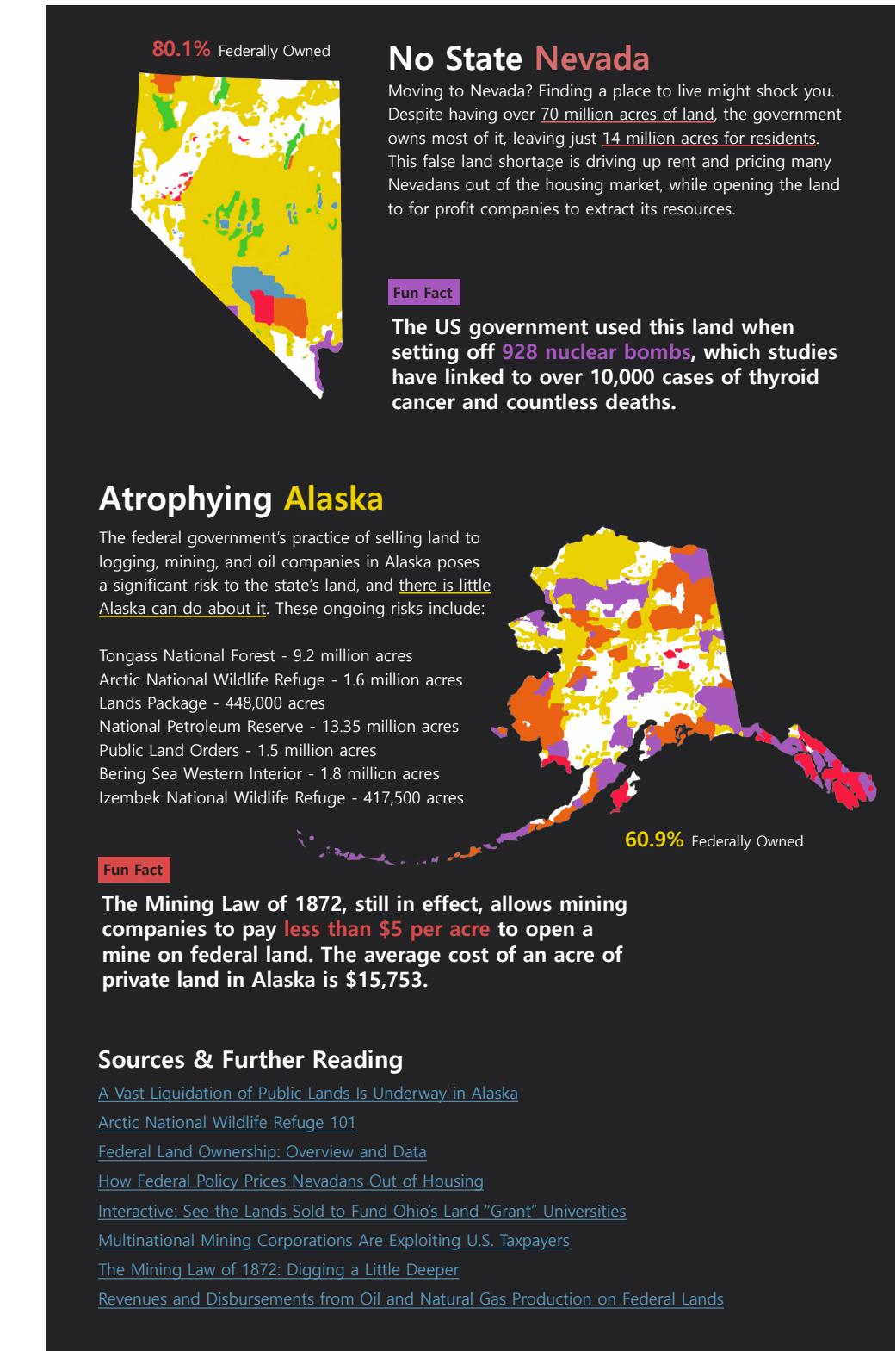
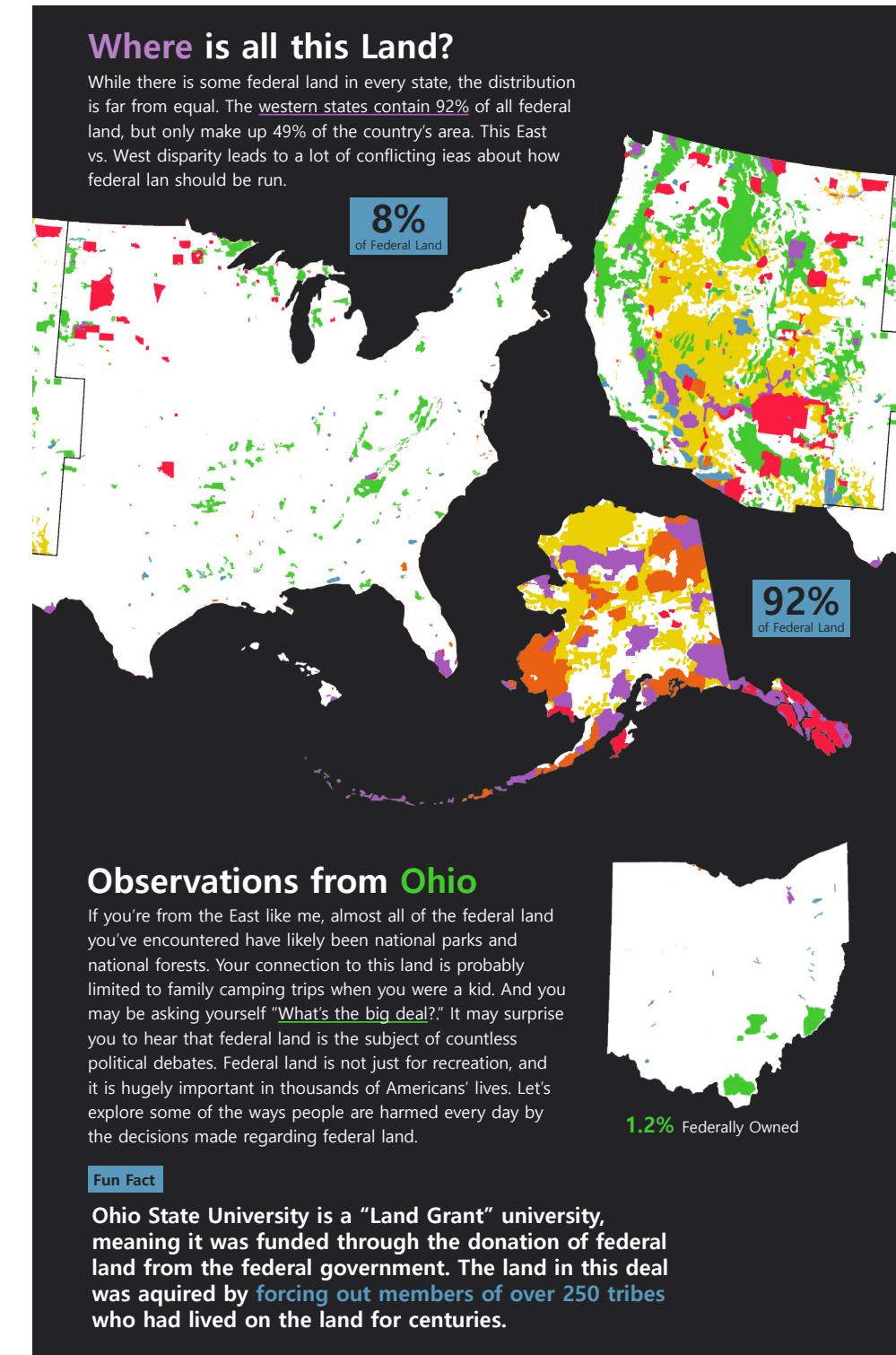
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Category	Acres Owned (millions)
Agriculture	244
Conservation	193
Recreation	80
Mining	89
Military	9
Other	24

**Fun Fact:** In 2019 the US government made **4.2 billion dollars** from renting federal land to oil and natural gas companies.

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Then after polishing up a few last details, I had arrived at the final destination.

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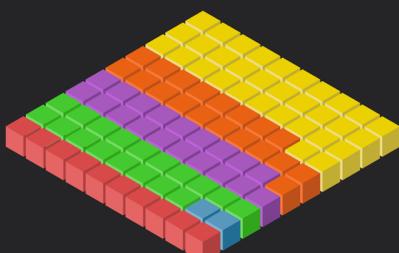
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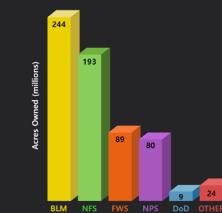
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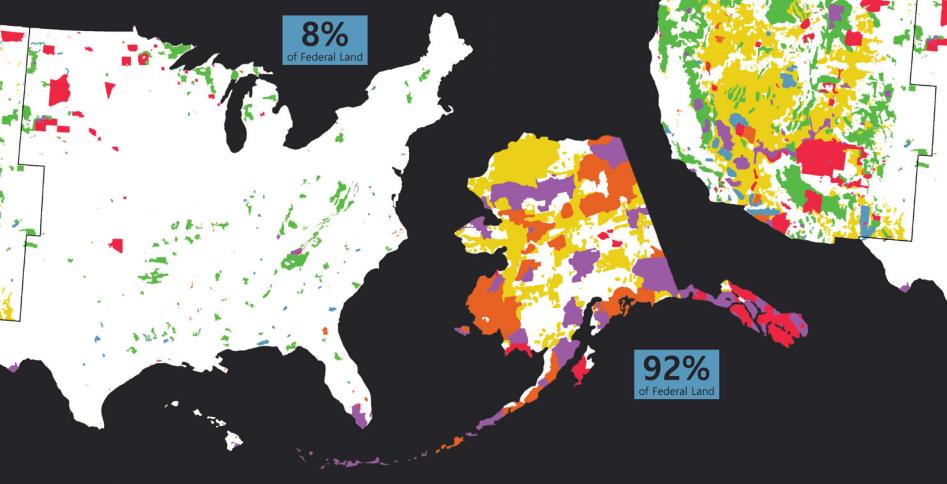
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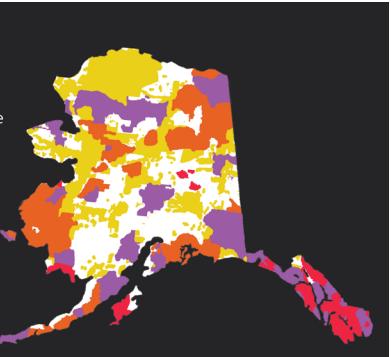
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# FINAL DELIVERABLES

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