

BLM Module 4: Other Types of Land Descriptions Study Guide

The slide features the BLM logo on the left, which includes the text 'NATIONAL SYSTEM OF PUBLIC LANDS', 'U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR', and 'BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT'. To the right of the logo, the text '2000-16' is displayed. The main title 'Interpret & Write Descriptions of Land' is in a large, bold font, with 'Other Types of Land Descriptions' in a smaller font below it. At the bottom, three small images are shown: a person using a surveying instrument, a topographic map, and a coin with the inscription 'U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR - UNLAWFUL TO DISTURB - BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT'.

Interpret and Write Descriptions of Land. Other Types of Land Descriptions.

MODULE OVERVIEW



This module covers how exceptions to the rectangular system are handled, including lots, special surveys, and marine managed areas. You'll also learn formatting for other common types of descriptions of land such as strip descriptions and residential lot and block descriptions of land.

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Objectives

The objectives of this module are to help you:

- Comprehend additional writing formats for strip descriptions, lot and block, and marine managed areas
- Use map and plat references in descriptions of land
- Identify requirements for using coordinates and geographic positions in descriptions of land



The objectives of this module are to help you: comprehend additional writing formats for strip descriptions, lot and block, and marine managed areas, use map and plat references in descriptions of land, and identify requirements for using coordinates and geographic positions in descriptions of land.

A presentation slide for Lesson 1. On the left is the Bureau of Land Management logo, which is a shield-shaped emblem with a mountain, river, and tree, and the text "NATIONAL SYSTEM OF PUBLIC LANDS", "U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR", and "BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT". To the right of the logo, the text "Lesson 1" is displayed in white on a dark grey background, and "Additional Writing Formats" is displayed in white on a green background. Below these elements are three small images: a surveyor using a tripod-mounted instrument, a historical map, and a coin with the text "U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR" and "UNLAWFUL TO DISTURB".

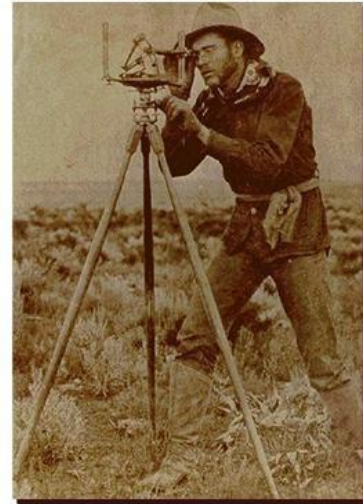
Lesson 1: Additional Writing Formats

BLM Module 4: Other Types of Land Descriptions Study Guide

Objectives

After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- Compare and contrast the differences between strip descriptions, lot and block descriptions, and marine managed area descriptions of land



After completing this lesson, you should be able to: compare and contrast the differences between strip descriptions, lot and block descriptions, and marine managed area descriptions of land.

Strip Description

Composed with Reference to a Center Line



We begin with the strip description which is a modified form of a metes-and-bounds description. It is used to describe linear features such as a utility corridor or road right-of-way. Strip descriptions are composed with reference to a center line with proper citation of the location and/or width with respect to the described line(s). In certain cases, strip descriptions can be used to avoid lengthy land descriptions since it does not describe the courses along the perimeter of a closed figure.

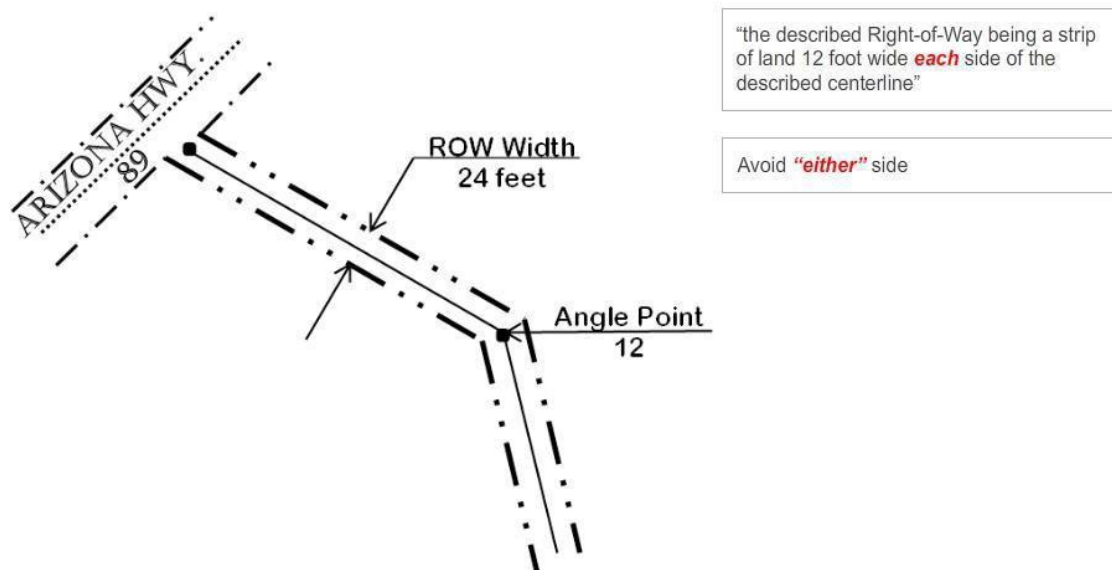
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Key Differences:

- Caption contains citation of center line width and position
- Body describes end point as “point of termination,” and no call made to “point of beginning” or “point of commencement”
- Center line located exactly midway between both sidelines
- Sidelines perpendicular and parallel to line
- Clause states how sidelines are interpreted
- Intended land interest stated clearly in clause

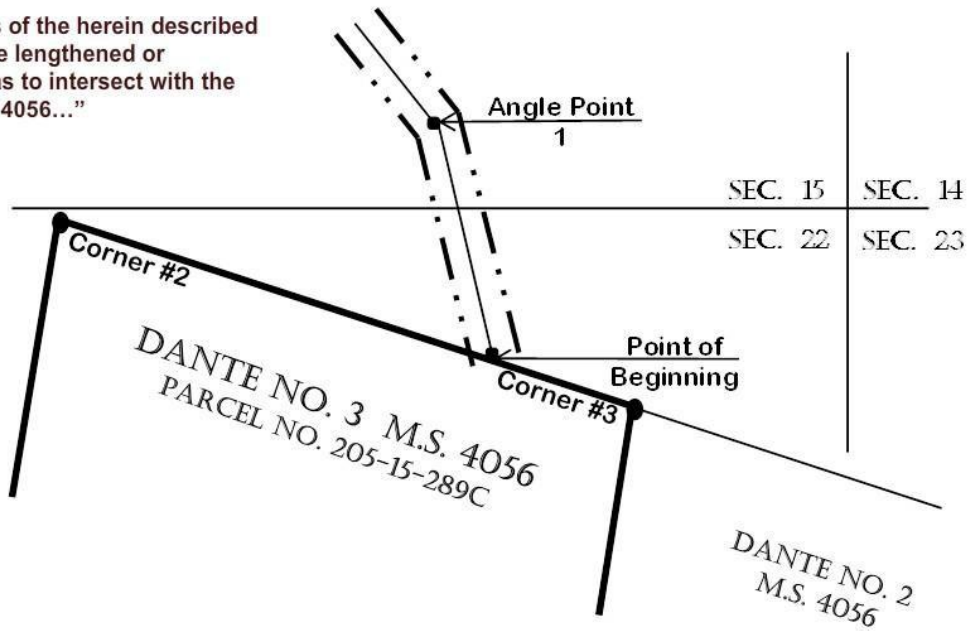
The actual composition of a strip description is very similar to a metes-and-bounds description. There are some key differences to the caption and body. The caption should contain a citation stating the width of the strip and the position of the described center line. The body is constructed mostly the same, except the end point of the described line is referred to as the “point of termination,” and no call is made back to the “point of beginning” or the “point of commencement.” The described center line is assumed to be located exactly midway between both sidelines, unless stated otherwise. The sidelines are assumed to be perpendicular and parallel to the described line, unless stated otherwise. A qualifying clause should be included to state how the beginnings and ends of the sidelines should be interpreted. The intended land interest, whether fee, easement, etc., should be stated clearly in a qualifying clause.



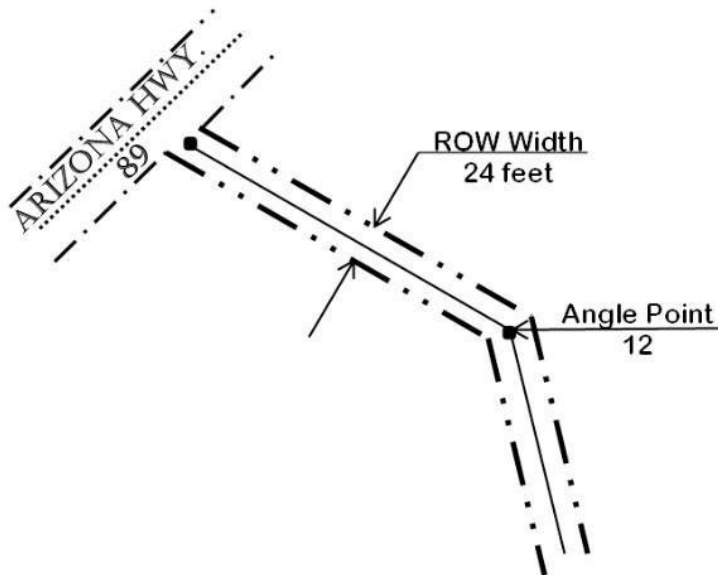
At times you may see descriptions including phrases like “the described Right-of-Way being a strip of land 12 foot wide each side of the described centerline.” However, stating “a strip of land 12 foot wide either side” is ambiguous and should be avoided.

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“The side lines of the herein described centerline to be lengthened or shortened so as to intersect with the Line 2-3 of MS 4056...”



Because the side lines are the actual bounds of the land described and parallel to the centerline, it is a best practice to include a qualifying statement or clause to eliminate gaps and overlaps by specifying where the side lines begin and terminate.



“The side lines of the herein described centerline to be lengthened or shortened so as to intersect with the Line 2-3 of MS 4056”

Displayed here is an example. “The side lines of the herein described centerline to be lengthened or shortened so as to intersect with the Line 2-3 of MS 4056 and the southeasterly Right-of-Way Arizona Highway 89.”

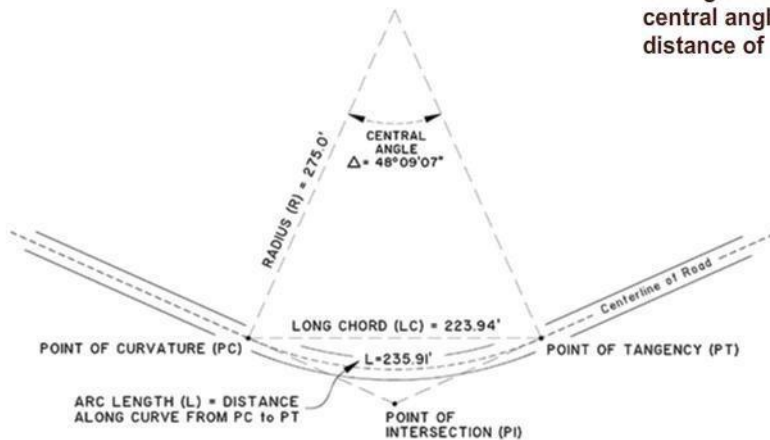
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“The easement is 1.35 miles in length, containing 3.92 acres of land.”



Often the quantity of the land contained within the described strip is provided in square feet or acreage.

HORIZONTAL CURVE DIAGRAM



“Thence along a tangent curve to the left having a radius 275.0 feet, through a central angle of 48° 09' 07”, an arc distance of 235.91 feet; ”

At times an easement centerline includes a curvature. In these cases, curve data is used to describe the easement centerline, the direction of curvature, and includes two or three mathematical elements within the description. With little exception, the curve data will be derived by field survey measurements and recited from the survey map or plat. For example, “Thence along a tangent curve to the left having a radius 275.0 feet, through a central angle of 48° 09' 07”, an arc distance of 235.91 feet; ”

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Qualifying Clauses

“The rights herein conveyed do not include the right to use the road for access for short term or long term residential purposes.”

Consult your agency policies, manuals, and handbooks for proper use.

Qualifying clauses are necessary to specify intent or purpose, easement duration, and other conditions of use. An example would be: “The rights herein conveyed do not include the right to use the road for access for short term or long term residential purposes.” As always, consult your agency policies, manuals, and handbooks for proper use of these types of qualifying clauses.



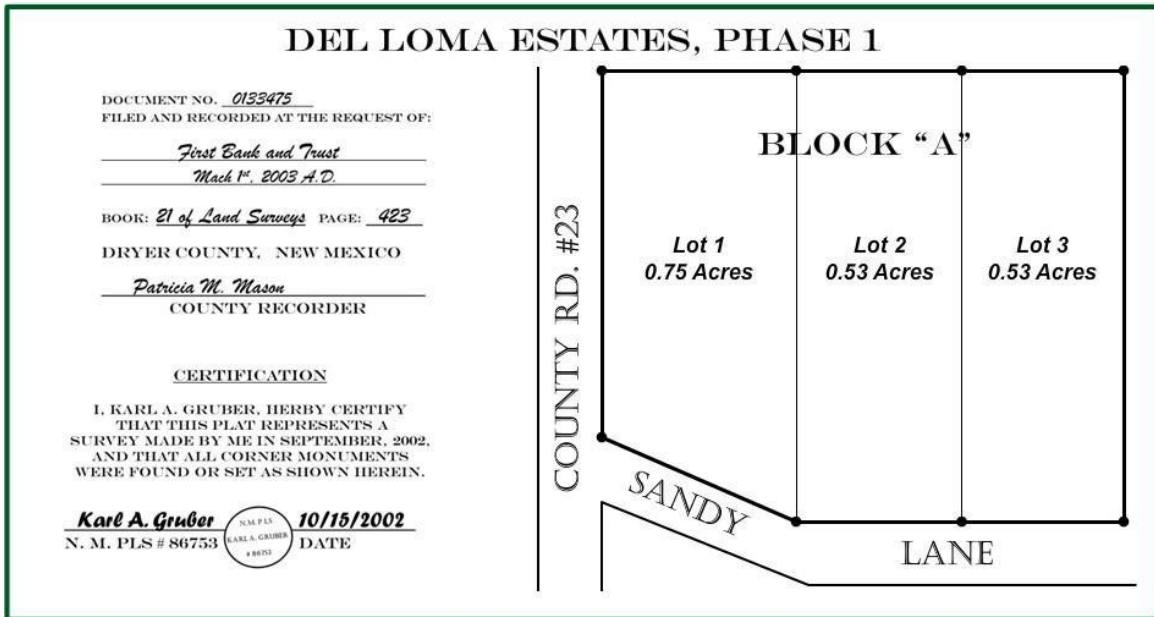
- Lot, parcel, or unit identifier
- Block identifier, if applicable
- Name or plat/map reference title
- Recording information
 - File, book, or volume
 - Page number, date, and location
- County and State

Not All Elements Required

Customs, Recording Information, and Requirements Vary

Earlier in module one, you were introduced to lot and block descriptions. In this lesson, you will learn how to properly format a lot and block description of land. There are five basic elements comprising the lot and block description. Lot, parcel, or unit identifier, block identifier, if applicable (some land divisions may not contain a block identifier), name or plat/map reference title, for example, “Sunny Acres Subdivision”, recording information which could be a file, book, or volume with the page number, the date and location of recordation included, and county and State. Not all elements are necessarily required to create an adequate lot and block description as customs, recording information, and requirements vary from state to state and even county to county.

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From the mock up plat displayed, these elements are used to make the lot and block description.

DOCUMENT NO. 0133475
FILED AND RECORDED AT THE REQUEST OF:
First Bank and Trust
March 1st, 2003 A.D.

BOOK: 21 of Land Surveys PAGE: 423
DRYER COUNTY, NEW MEXICO
Patricia M. Mason
COUNTY RECORDER

Lot - "2", Block - "A", name of plat - "Del Loma Estates, Phase 1," recording information - "Book 21 of Land Surveys, Page 423", document number - "0133475," and County and State - "Dryer County, New Mexico."

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DEL LOMA ESTATES, PHASE 1

DOCUMENT NO. 0133475
 FILED AND RECORDED AT THE REQUEST OF:
First Bank and Trust
March 1st, 2003 A.D.

BOOK: 21 of Land Surveys PAGE: 423
 DRYER COUNTY, NEW MEXICO
Patricia M. Mason
 COUNTY RECORDER

BLOCK "A"

CITY RD. #23

Lot 1
0.75 Acres

Lot 2
0.53 Acres

Lot 3
0.53 Acres

LANE

Lot 2, Block A, Del Loma Estates,
recorded in Book 21 of Land Surveys, Page 423,
Document Number 0133475,
County Recorder's Office,
Dryer County, New Mexico

CERTIFICATION

I, KARL A. GRUBER
 THAT THIS PLAT
 SURVEY MADE BY ME
 AND THAT ALL CORNERS
 WERE FOUND OR SET

Karl A. Gruber
 N. M. PLS # 86753

And is formatted in writing as Lot 2, Block A, Del Loma Estates, recorded in Book 21 of land surveys, Page 423, Document Number 0133475, County Recorder's Office, Dryer County, New Mexico.



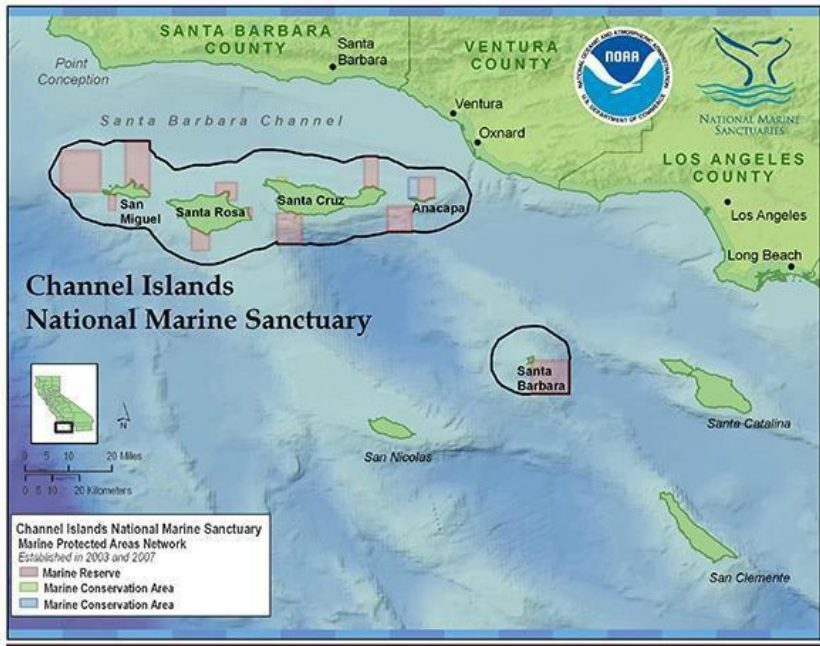
MMA

- Marine sanctuaries
- Fishery management zones
- National seashores and monuments
- Critical habitats
- National wildlife refuges



Finally is the marine managed area, or MMA. A marine managed area is a geographic area designed to protect or manage resources within the marine environment. Types of MMAs include marine sanctuaries, fishery management zones, national seashores, national monuments, critical habitats, and national wildlife refuges. These areas are managed by a wide range of Federal and State agencies.

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Descriptions:

- Preamble
- Body
- Clause

The descriptions of marine managed areas are often a metes-and-bounds type description. They are comprised of a preamble, body, and clause as learned earlier in module 3.



Marine Areas

- Naming natural or artificial monuments
- Stating lengths and directions of lines connecting successive corners
- Giving the boundaries of abutting lands or marine areas, or a series of geographic coordinates



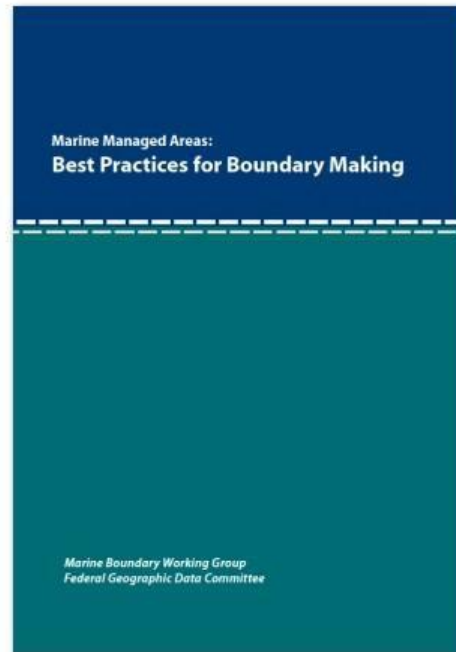
Work with Boundary and Mapping professionals for technical guidance.



The location and boundaries of marine areas are defined by describing its boundaries by: naming natural or artificial monuments to, from, or along which it runs, stating the lengths and directions of the lines connecting successive corners and/or monuments, giving the boundaries of abutting lands or marine areas, or a series of geographic coordinates. You will learn more about geographic coordinates later in this module. When describing a marine boundary, the boundary developer should work with Boundary and Mapping professionals for technical guidance.

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Available from the National
Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration (NOAA)



Additional information can be found in a manual titled, "Marine Managed Areas: Best Practices for Boundary Making." It is available from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration or NOAA.

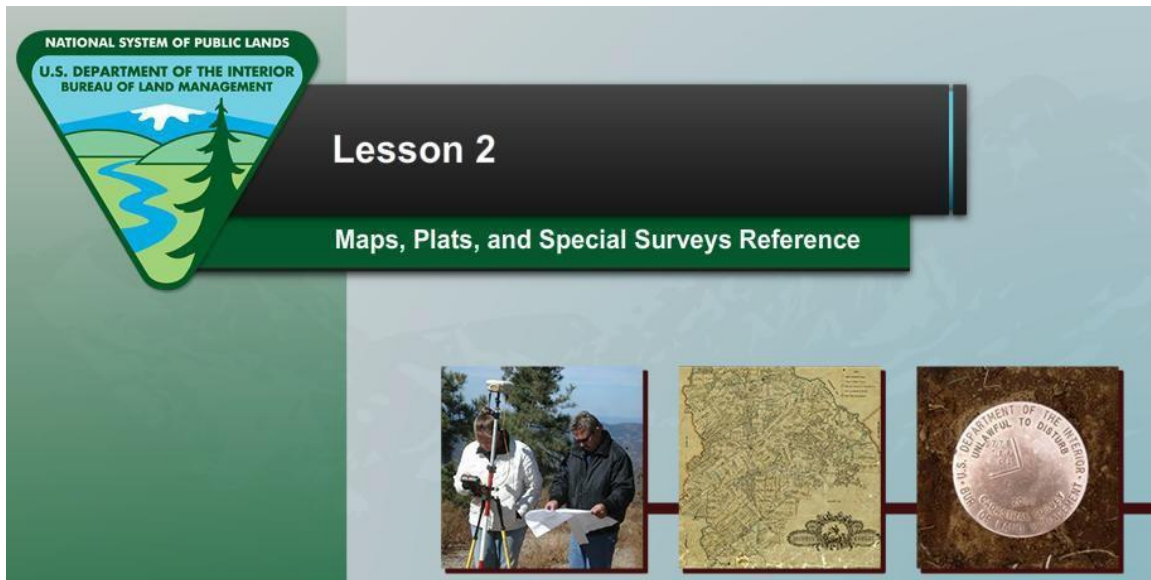
SkillCheck

Which example should be used to correctly describe a Right-of-Way width?

- A. A strip of land being one chain wide each side of the described centerline.
- B. A strip of land 66 feet either side of the herein described centerline.

Correct Answer: A strip of land being one chain wide each side of the described centerline.

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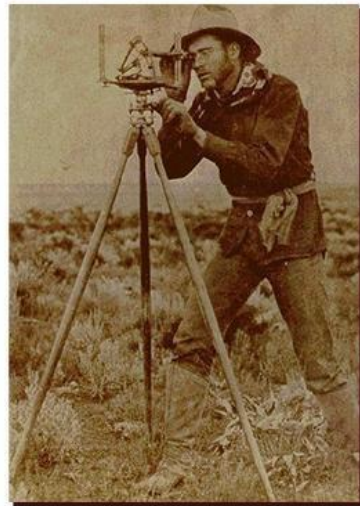
The slide features the Bureau of Land Management logo on the left, which includes the text "NATIONAL SYSTEM OF PUBLIC LANDS", "U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR", and "BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT". To the right of the logo, the text "Lesson 2" is displayed in a large white font on a dark background, and "Maps, Plats, and Special Surveys Reference" is displayed in a smaller white font on a green background below it. At the bottom of the slide, there are three small images: a person using a surveying instrument, a historical map, and a circular seal with the text "U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR" and "UNLAWFUL TO DISTURB" around a central emblem.

Lesson 2: Maps and Plats Special Surveys Reference

Objectives

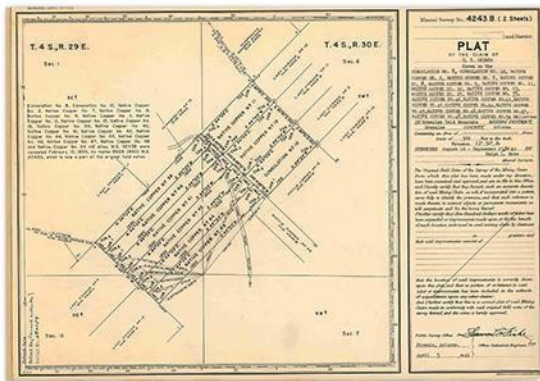
After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- Write a reference to a map, plat, or special survey for use in a description of land



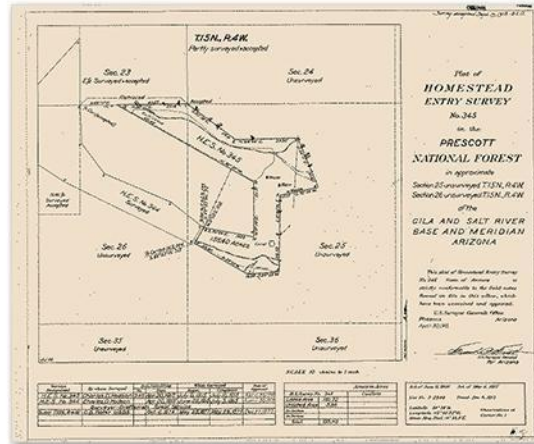
After completing this lesson, you should be able to: write a reference to a map, plat, or special survey for use in a description of land.

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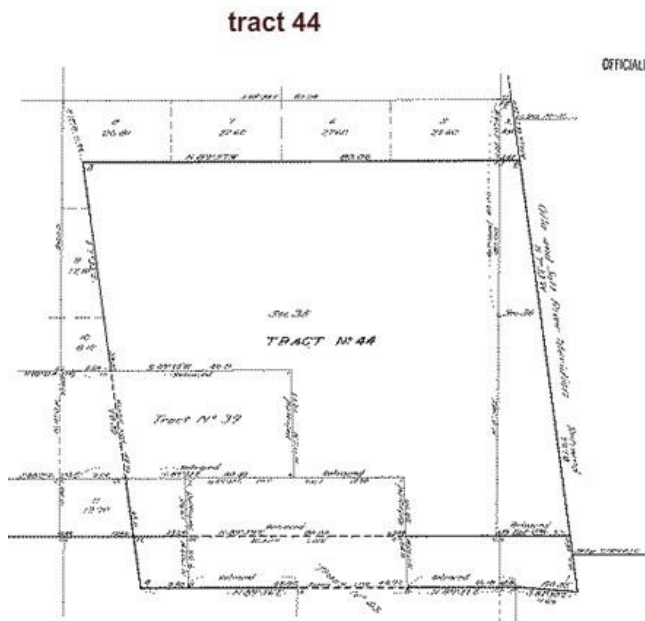
Special Surveys

- Do not conform to PLSS
- Not written in metes-and-bounds format



Survey Designation
Typically a Type
and Number

Earlier in module 3, you learned that special surveys do not conform to the PLSS. While these surveys are metes-and-bounds in nature, they are not written in a metes-and-bounds format. Therefore, do not recite the exterior boundaries in the description of land for a special survey.



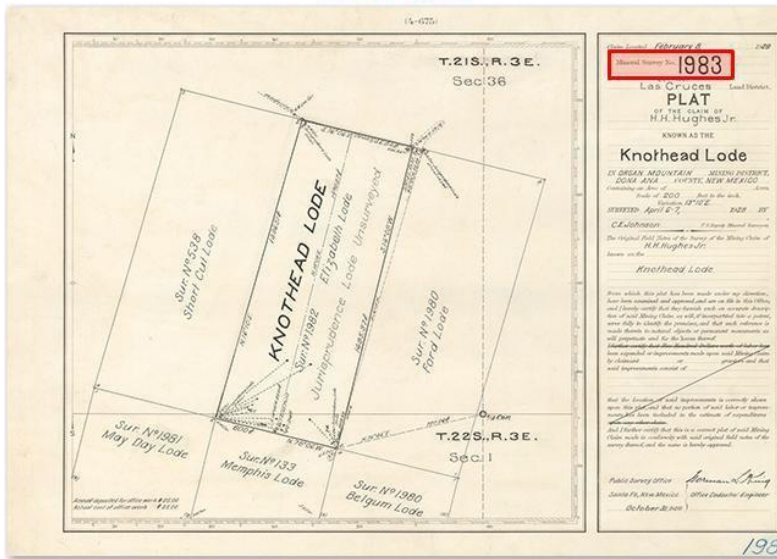
Written with Meridian,
State, Township, and
Range Designation

True for Other
Nonrectangular Surveys

Instead, these are described by the survey designation which is typically a type and number. For example, tract 44 is simply written “tract 44” along with the Meridian, State, Township, and Range designation. The same is true for other non-rectangular surveys.

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M.S. 1983



Special Survey Parcels

- No longer considered part of the section
- No need to associate with a section

Some survey types utilize an abbreviation such as Mineral Survey 1983, which is written M.S. 1983. Except for lots, special survey parcels are no longer considered part of the sections in which it lies. So, there is not a need to associate them with a section or sections.

Example No. 8

Gila and Salt River Meridian, Arizona
 T. 23 N., R. 32 W.,
 sec. 4;
 tract 37.
 T. 23 N., R. 33 W.,
 sec. 9;
 tract 46;
 M.S. No. 3202.
 Tps. 23 N., Rs. 34 and 35 W.,
 tract 57;
 M.S. No. 246.
 The areas described aggregate 3,233.86 acres.

Order Written:

- Aliquot parts
- Tracts
- Nonrectangular surveys



Here, example Number 8 from the Specifications is used to illustrate how the description of land is written. Gila and Salt River Meridian, Arizona, Tps. 23 N., Rs. 34 and 35 W., tract 57; M.S. No. 246. When special surveys are included with aliquot parts of townships or sections, the aliquot parts are written first. Next would be tracts, followed by other nonrectangular surveys.

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Lots Written First

Multiple Sections Example No. 2

Fifth Principal Meridian, North Dakota
T. 160 N., R. 66 W.,
sec. 6, lots 4 thru 7, SE1/4NW1/4, and E1/2SW1/4;
sec. 7, lots 1 thru 4, E1/2NW1/4, and E1/2SW1/4;
sec. 17, W1/2SW1/4;
sec. 18, NE1/4;
sec. 20, W1/2NW1/4 and SW1/4.
The areas described aggregate 1,090.18 acres.

Lots Associated with Sections

Here, example Number 2 from the Specifications is used to illustrate how the description of land is written that includes lots. Fifth Principal Meridian, North Dakota T. 160 N., R. 66 W., sec. 6, lots 4 thru 7, SE1/4NW1/4, and E1/2SW1/4. Remember lots must be associated with the sections they are contained in.

Officially Filed

DATE MARCH 08, 2011

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Anchorage, Alaska

This plat is strictly conformable to the approved field notes, and the survey, having been correctly executed in accordance with the requirements of law and the regulations of this Bureau, is hereby accepted.

For the Director



OCT. 6, 2010
Date

Chief Cadastral Surveyor for Alaska

It is assumed that a land description refers to the most recent official survey at the time it was written. In some cases, it may also be necessary to cite the specific survey plat used by the date of acceptance, filing number, or other unique identifier.

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Reference:

- Is efficient
- Saves time
- Prevents errors

Jackson - Roberts Brushy Mountain Parcel #1105 - C 149.43 Acres

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA,
COUNTY OF JACKSON

THE FOREGOING CERTIFICATES OF M. WENDELL WALLACE, REGISTERED LAND SURVEYOR #1157 ARE CERTIFIED TO BE CORRECT. THIS INSTRUMENT WAS PRESENTED FOR REGISTRATION AND RECORDED IN THIS OFFICE IN PLAT BOOK 9 PAGE 45

THIS 24th DAY OF April
AT 2:15 O'CLOCK P.M. YEAR 1998

Russel Brunnel
REGISTER OF DEEDS

Survey of
Carla K. Jackson
and
Carol J. Roberts
Brushy Mountain Parcel
Jefferson Township, Jackson County,
North Carolina
Job # 9S01S4 - April 15, 1998
Prepared by M. Wendell Wallace, LS #1157

Now we will discuss the use of referencing other maps and plats of survey within a description of land. Similar to a reference to a specific subdivision plat used in lot and block descriptions, a reference to survey plats created in the private sector is also an efficient way to describe land. Simply making reference to a recorded plat, without reciting the survey measurement, not only saves time, but also prevents typographical and transposition errors. Displayed here is one example of using and formatting a reference.

The boundaries of the parcel described are shown upon survey plat titled Survey for Carla K. Jackson and Carol J. Roberts, Brushy Mountain Parcel, dated April 15th, 1998 filed in Jackson County, North Carolina Register of Deeds, Plat Book 9, Page 45.

"being that same parcel shown on that certain plat . . ."

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA,
COUNTY OF JACKSON

THE FOREGOING CERTIFICATES OF M. WENDELL WALLACE, REGISTERED LAND SURVEYOR #1157 ARE CERTIFIED TO BE CORRECT. THIS INSTRUMENT WAS PRESENTED FOR REGISTRATION AND RECORDED IN THIS OFFICE IN PLAT BOOK 9 PAGE 45

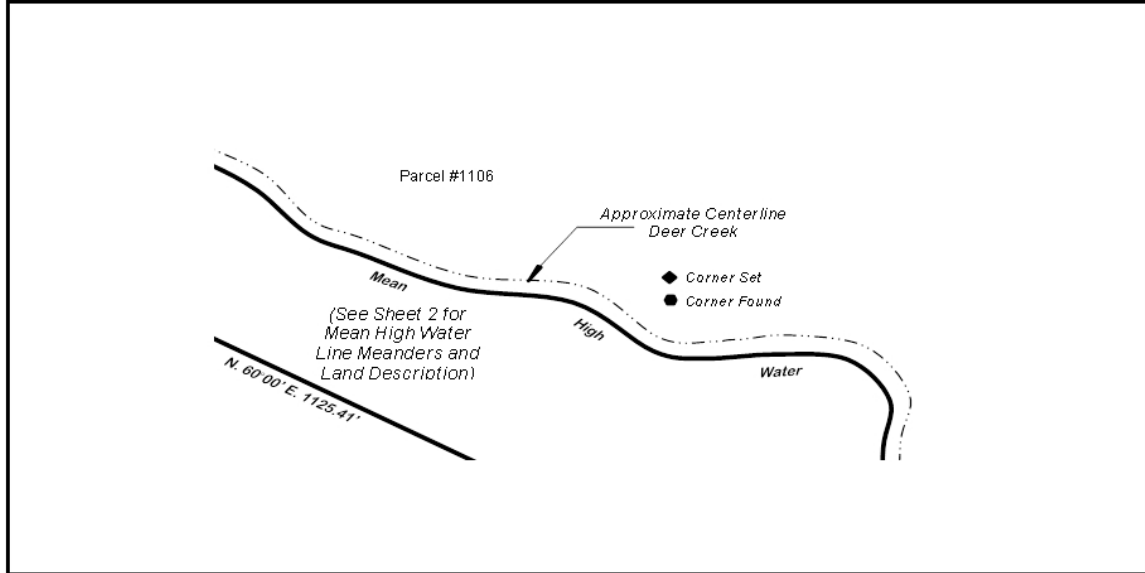
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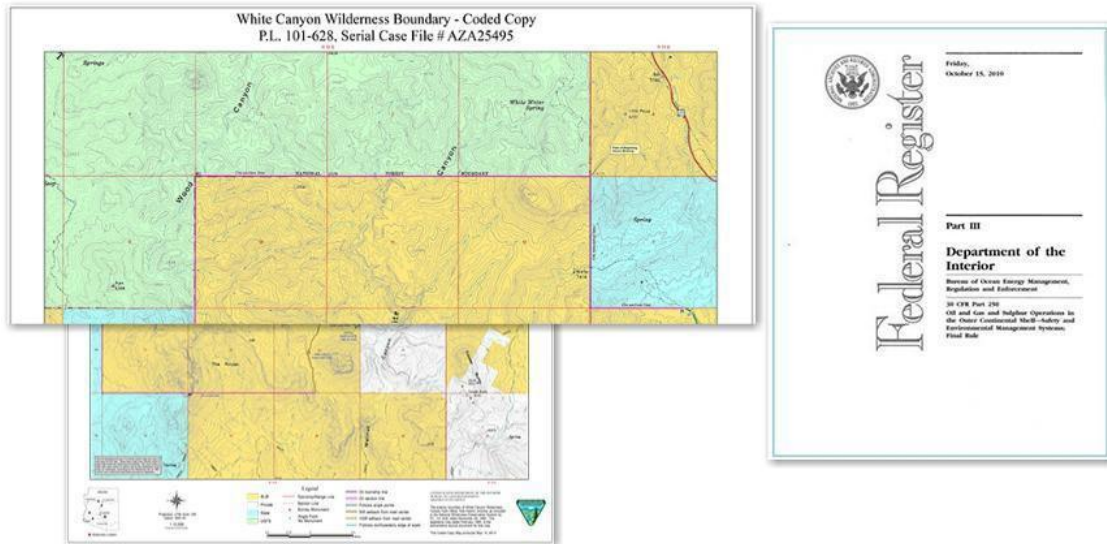
"The boundaries of said parcel described are shown upon survey plat titled Survey for Carla K. Jackson and Carol J. Roberts, Brushy Mountain Parcel, dated April 15th, 1998 filed in Jackson County, North Carolina Register of Deeds, Plat Book 9 Page 45." In both colonial survey states and private industry, verbiage like "being that same parcel shown on that certain plat . . ." is followed with identifiers such as recording information, the plat title, date, surveyor name, and survey license number.

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This method is particularly desirable when new survey measurements vary somewhat from an earlier survey and in cases with extensive or complex survey data.

Integral Part of Land Order or Proclamation



Under some conditions, incorporating a plat, map or diagram as an integral part of a land order or proclamation may be essential and Federal Register Regulations must be followed for documents filed with the Office of the Federal Register.

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Preparing Maps/Diagrams Done with Technical Expertise



Specifications Reference: Chapter IV

Preparing such maps and diagrams must be done with technical expertise provided by Boundary and Mapping Professionals. For further guidance, see chapter IV of the Specifications.

SkillCheck

True or False: Except for lots, special survey areas are no longer considered part of the sections in which it lies. So, there is not a need to associate them with a section or sections.

- A. True
- B. False

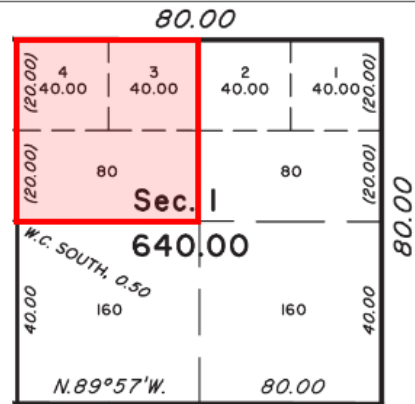
Correct Answer: True

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SkillCheck

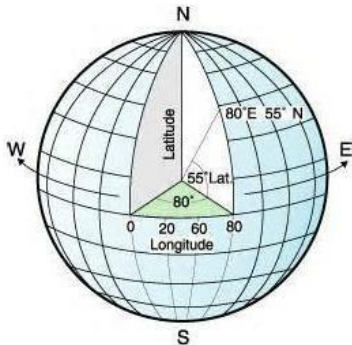
Review the graphic and select the correctly written description of land.

- A. sec. 1, NW1/4.
- B. sec. 1, lots 3 and 4 and S1/2NW1/4.
- C. sec. 1, NW1/4 including lots 3 and 4.



Correct Answer: sec. 1, lots 3 and 4 and S1/2NW1/4.

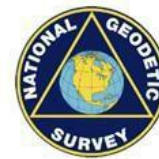
Coordinate Pairs: X, Y



Classes:

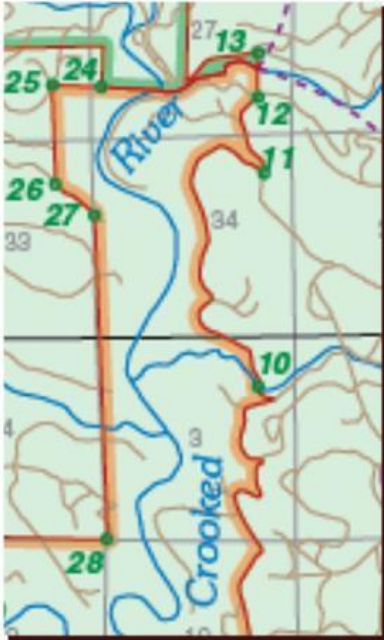
- Geographic positions (latitudes and longitudes)
- Plane-coordinate (x and y) positions

Publications and Tutorials Available from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Geodetic Survey



The location of a point on the surface of the earth may be accurately described by expressing its position on a well-established system of coordinates. Coordinate pairs, commonly referred to as an "x" and "y" is a way to reference a point in relationship to a specific origin point. The two general classes of coordinates used are the: geographic positions (latitudes and longitudes), and plane-coordinate (x and y) positions derived from and dependent upon geographic positions. Gaining an understanding of coordinate geometry and the concepts and principles of geodesy are beyond the scope of this course. Publications and tutorials on these subjects are available from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Geodetic Survey.

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Geographic Coordinates

- Describe and map ambulatory boundaries
- Establish unique boundary points for coordinate values with known reference datum and coordinate system

Use of geographic coordinates is an efficient way to describe and map ambulatory boundaries. The boundary points will be unique and can be reestablished after coordinate values have been determined as long as the reference datum and coordinate system are known.

ORS [390.640](#) applies to all the land located along the Pacific Ocean between extreme low tide and the lines of vegetation as established and described according to the Oregon State Plane Coordinate System of 1927, as follows:

Oregon State Plane Coordinate System of 1927, north zone

Point Number	y-coordinate	x-coordinate
Cl-7-1	951,840	1,112,374
Cl-7-2	951,448	1,112,500
Cl-7-3	951,011	1,112,297
Cl-7-4	950,883	1,112,300
Cl-7-5	950,172	1,112,573
Cl-7-6	947,537	1,113,734

Description of Location of **Point Number Cl-7-6: A point near the north boundary of Fort Stevens State Park located in section 1 of township 8 north, range 11 west of the Willamette Meridian in Clatsop County.**

For land descriptions using coordinates, consult with your agency land surveyor.

An example is the coastal survey land description in this Oregon statute. Note the coordinates are described as being Oregon State Plane Coordinate System, north zone – which is referenced to the North American Datum of 1927. Also note that additional descriptors are provided for clarity. For writing or interpreting land descriptions using coordinates, consultation with your agency land surveyor is essential.

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Summary

Having completed this module, you should now be able to:

- Comprehend additional writing formats for strip descriptions, lot and block, and marine managed areas
- Use map and plat references in descriptions of land
- Identify requirements for using coordinates and geographic positions in descriptions of land



Having completed this module, you should now be able to: comprehend additional writing formats for strip descriptions, lot and block, and marine managed areas, use map and plat references in descriptions of land, and identify requirements for using coordinates and geographic descriptions of land.

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Quiz Answer Key

1. The actual composition of a strip description is very similar to a metes-and-bounds description. Which of the following is a key difference?

- A. The caption should contain a citation stating the longitude and latitude of the described center line.**
- B. The body states the end point of the described line. It is referred to as the “point of termination,” and no call is made back to a “point of beginning.”**
- C. The body describes the perimeter of the strip.**

Correct Answer: The body states the end point of the described line. It is referred to as the “point of termination,” and no call is made back to a “point of beginning.”

2. There are five basic elements comprising the lot and block description. (Select all that apply.)

- A. Lot, parcel, or unit identifier**
- B. Block identifier, if applicable**
- C. Principal Meridian**
- D. Name or plat/map reference title**
- E. Recording information**
- F. Township**

Correct Answers: A. Lot, parcel, or unit identifier, B. Block identifier, if applicable, D. Name or plat/map reference title, E. Recording information

3. True or False: Easement centerlines can run along curves. In these cases, curve data is used to describe the easement centerline, the direction of curvature, and includes two or three mathematical elements within the description.

Correct Answer: True

4. True or False: When writing land descriptions for special surveys, such as a Mineral Survey, include the survey measurements to resolve ambiguity.

Correct Answer: False

5. When referencing other maps or plats of survey, what typical identifiers should be included within the reference? (Select all that apply.)

- A. Plat title**
- B. Survey measurements**
- C. Date**
- D. Surveyor name and license number**

Correct Answers: A. Plat title, C. Date, D. Surveyor name and license number

6. True or False: Geographic coordinates can be used to describe ambulatory boundary points located as a result of a survey.

Correct Answer: True

BLM Module 4: Other Types of Land Descriptions Study Guide

7. Which of the following are needed to reestablish unique boundary points from a coordinate pair? (Select all that apply.)

- A. State and County
- B. Coordinate System
- C. General location descriptor
- D. Datum

Correct Answers: B. Coordinate System, D. Datum

8. True or False: When referring to a recorded plat in a land description, stating the surveyor's title is required in the body.

Correct Answer: False

9. Review the descriptions. What types of boundaries are the descriptions describing?

- A. Strip descriptions
- B. Lot and Block
- C. Marine Managed Areas

1. Naming natural/artificial monuments to, from, or along which it runs;
2. Stating the lengths and directions of the lines connecting successive corners and/or monuments;
3. Giving the boundaries of abutting lands
4. A series of geographic coordinates

Correct Answer: Marine Managed Area

10. With special surveys and aliquot parts combined in a land description, which of the following are written in the correct order? (Select all that apply)

- A. Meridian, State
Township, Range
sec. 6, lot 1, SE1/4NE1/4.
- B. Meridian, State
Township, Range
sec. 6, M.S. 522
- C. Meridian, State
Township, Range
lot 1 sec. 6, SE1/4NE1/4.
- D. Meridian, State
Township, Range
sec. 35, lots 1 thru 5;
tract 37.

Correct Answers:

- A: Meridian, State
Township, Range
sec. 6, lot 1, SE1/4NE1/4.
- D. Meridian, State
Township, Range
sec. 35, lots 1 thru 5;
tract 37.