

Sagebrush Rebellion Encyclopedia Article

Sagebrush Rebellion

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Sagebrush Rebellion

A political movement in certain western states during the late 1970s, sparked by passage of the **Federal Land Policy and Management Act** in 1976. The federal government owns an average of 60% of the land in the twelve states that include the Rockies or lie west of them. Cattlemen, miners, loggers, developers, farmers, and others argued not only that federal ownership had an adverse impact on the economy of their states, but that it violated the principle of states' rights. This group demanded that the federal government transfer control over large amounts of this land to individual states, insisting on their right to make their own decisions about the management of both the land itself and the **natural resources**. The rebellion was defused after the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980. He appointed James Watt, who had been a leader of this movement, as Secretary of the Interior, and oversaw the institution of the so-called "good neighbor" policy for the management of federal lands.

See Also

Wise Use Movement