

Ministère de la culture et de la communication

Concours réservé « loi Sauvadet » pour l'accès au corps de conservateur du patrimoine, spécialités « archéologie », « monuments historiques et inventaire » et « musées », organisé au titre de l'année 2015

SESSION 2015

Épreuve orale d'admission n°2 : épreuve d'anglais

3 octobre 2016

La seconde épreuve d'admission consiste en une conversation dans une langue vivante étrangère à partir d'un texte.

La langue vivante étrangère faisant l'objet de cette épreuve est choisie par le candidat lors de l'inscription parmi les langues suivantes: allemand, anglais, arabe, chinois, espagnol, italien, japonais, russe, portugais, polonais.

(Préparation de l'épreuve : 30 minutes ; durée de l'épreuve : 30 minutes ; coefficient 1).

Avertissement :

- avant de commencer, vérifiez que le sujet qui vous a été remis comporte toutes les questions ; signalez aux surveillants tout de suite les anomalies éventuelles (page manquante, page illisible...).

Ce document comporte 2 pages au total.

SUJET n°9

Lexington | Land made for you and me

The controversies that go with creating new national monuments



IN GENERAL, any law that presidents mostly use in their second terms has unusual power to cause rows. Take the American Antiquities Act of 1906, giving presidents the right to protect landmarks and landscapes by declaring them national monuments—in the process bypassing Congress, which must approve new national parks and formal “wilderness” reserves. Safely past his last election, Barack Obama has been using the act with a will in recent weeks, creating a new national monument in the woods of Maine and more than quadrupling the size of a marine monument north-west of Hawaii, itself declared by George W. Bush during his second term. In all, Mr Obama has created more than two dozen national monuments, protecting more square miles of land and sea than any predecessor.

If these actions delight some, they alarm others—notably folk who run cattle, mine, log or otherwise exploit nature’s bounty in picturesque bits of America. One such place is the Owyhee basin of eastern Oregon, a remote landscape of wild rivers and vertiginous cliffs, and high desert edged with red and pink rocks. Before Mr Obama steps down, environmentalists, outdoor-leisure companies (including Keen, an Oregon-based shoe-maker) and some Democratic politicians want him to create an Owyhee Canyonlands National Monument covering as much as 2.5m acres.

Lots of monument-backers say that their main concern is possible oil and mineral extraction on what are today federally owned rangelands overseen by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), not grazing cattle. But ranchers are deeply wary. Bob Skinner, whose family reached the Owyhee basin in 1863, is so alarmed that, one morning earlier this summer, he took Lexington up in his own light aircraft on an endearingly transparent mission: to badmouth a landscape that, deep down, he clearly loves. That’s lava from an eruption 600 years ago, Mr Skinner shouts over the Cessna’s engine, pointing to an otherworldly expanse of crusted black rock. Terrible, razor-sharp lava, he scowls: “Will cripple a dog in ten minutes.” A deep canyon is “pretty”, he concedes. But as he putters 100 feet above flat, sagebrush-scented steppes that lie beyond it, he demands: “Once you’ve seen one mile of it, what’s more of it?” He is echoed by Larry Wilson, an elected commissioner for the surrounding region, Malheur County, also along for the ride. Temperatures can exceed 100 de-

grees down there, says Mr Wilson: “This isn’t the kind of stuff that draws tourists.” Should any hikers try their luck, Mr Wilson adds doomily, the county has a tiny search-and-rescue budget. As the steppes roll on below, the men point out dirt roads that they fear might be barred to motor vehicles in a national monument, or creek-crossings that might be closed, forcing ranchers on 60-mile detours. Perhaps most of all, ranchers fear that a monument will open the door to endless lawsuits by environmental groups.

The West has long seen arguments over land. Mr Skinner’s grandfather, as a boy, was posted to watch for free-roaming sheep that could strip pastures bare, until a 1934 act regulated grazing. The 1970s and 1980s saw “sagebrush rebels” chafing against the federal government, which owns half of all land west of the Rockies. The Skinner Ranch lies a short drive (by Oregon standards) from the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, a remote spot occupied by armed anti-government militants early this year to protest against the jailing of two local ranchers for setting fires that spread to government property, and to challenge the feds’ legal right to own land at all—an occupation which ended with a protester’s death in a stand-off with FBI agents. Some Republicans, including Congressman Rob Bishop and Senator Mike Lee of Utah and Senator Ted Cruz of Texas, want federal lands transferred wholesale to the states. There are eco-absolutists, too, who call ranchers crony capitalists, exploiting too-cheap BLM grazing permits: some would ban cattle outright from public lands.

Still, on the ground, compromise does not sound impossible. Mr Skinner sympathises with his ranching neighbours jailed for arson; but he has no truck with anti-government radicals, and thinks that the BLM has every right to exist. Nor does he think local control a panacea. Though rural Oregon is conservative, political power resides where most people live, in such left-leaning cities as Portland. If Democrat-run Oregon took over land management from the feds, Mr Skinner thinks ranchers’ problems would be “multiplied tenfold”. He also suggests that, if federal officials called for a smaller reserve, perhaps covering 48,000 acres, many locals would be willing to talk.

A young neighbour, Elias Eiguren, says militants hurt the ranchers’ peaceful, law-abiding cause. Most came from out of state, he sighs: “Those people look like us, but aren’t us.” The local congressman, Greg Walden, walks a fine line. He has joined fellow-Republicans in seeking to bar new national-monument designations, but has not endorsed sweeping transfers of federal land to the states. Mr Walden says the right way to protect precious places is with legislation passed by Congress, to ensure individual rights are protected from bullying, far-off majorities. Alas, a polarised Congress has passed hardly any public-lands bills in recent years.

The rural-urban canyon

Malheur County (population, 30,000) held a referendum in March, with 90% of votes cast opposing a national monument. Mr Wilson thinks his county’s wishes should weigh “very heavily”. Local voices must be “respected”, agrees Neil Kornze, director of the BLM. But public lands are owned by all Americans: 60m visit them to hike, camp or river-raft there each year. Decades ago, Mr Kornze notes, his bureau’s badge showed five working men: a surveyor, a miner, a cowboy, a logger and an oilman. Now, reflecting public priorities, it shows a pretty mountain and a river. Managing that change will require national, state and local leaders to find common ground: a seemingly monumental task. ■