ADVANCE FACT SHEET

EXHIBITION: AMERICAN LANDSCAPE

DATES: The Museum of Modern Art, New York
July 9-September 27, 1981

SPONSOR: Springs Mills, Inc.
This exhibition is part of the Springs Mills Series
on the Art of Photography

DIRECTOR: John Szarkowski, Director of the Department of Photography,
The Museum of Modern Art

CONTENTS: AMERICAN LANDSCAPE, an exhibition of approximately 55
photographs taken between the 1860s and the present,
will explore the changing concept and definition of
the natural site.

The landscape in painting, a relatively modern concept
which developed late in the 18th century, celebrated
a new sense of cordial intent between man and nature.
Landscapes expressed the perception that the force
of wilderness had been tamed a little, that it was
less terrifying and had become a subject available
to the lyric sensibility. In 19th century America
this was a hard point to make. If America had little
landscape art, it was because it had little landscape,
as defined above. America had wilderness which, espe-
cially in the West, was extraordinarily inhospitable
to the traditional concept of pastoral beauty.
Mr. Szarkowski contends that for the photographer, the
problem was even more difficult than it was for the
painter, because the photographer was limited to what
was in fact there.

The problem, he says, was not solved, but redefined, by
men who were not artists in the traditional sense.
The photographer-as-explorer was a "new kind of picture
maker: part scientist, part reporter and part artist."
As a group, their work, Szarkowski has written, "was
the beginning of a continuing, inventive, indigenous

continued/
tradition, a tradition motivated by the desire to explore and understand the natural site." AMERICAN LANDSCAPE will include the survey photographs of Timothy O'Sullivan, the aesthetic statements of the pictorialist and Photo-Secession movements by, among others, Edward Steichen and Alvin Langdon Coburn, and the contemporary, interpretive works of Robert Adams, and William Clift. Each of the photographers represented in the exhibition has attempted to define what the earth is like and has presented new discoveries concerning the structure, the beauty, and the meaning of our habitat.

TRAVEL:
Upon its closing at The Museum of Modern Art on September 27, 1981, AMERICAN LANDSCAPE will travel to the following: the Worcester Art Museum in Worcester, Massachusetts (November 24, 1981 - January 3, 1982); Akron Art Institute in Akron, Ohio (January 23 - March 7, 1982); Edwin A. Ulrich Museum of Art at Wichita State University in Wichita, Kansas (March 31 - May 9, 1982); the Gibbes Art Gallery in Charleston, South Carolina (July 1 - August 15, 1982); San Antonio Museum of Art in San Antonio, Texas (September 10 - November 7, 1982) and the Chicago Public Library, Chicago, Illinois (November 29, 1982 - January 9, 1983).

PUBLICATION:
A catalog, underwritten by Springs Mills, Inc., will be published in conjunction with the exhibition. It will include the 54 photographs from AMERICAN LANDSCAPE and an introductory essay by John Szarkowski. The book will be published by The Museum of Modern Art and distributed by the New York Graphic Society. Clothbound, $14.95; paperbound, $7.95 (prices tentative).

PRESS PREVIEW:
Wednesday, July 8, 1981, 3:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.

PUBLIC OPENING:
Thursday, July 9, 1981