The Area Redevelopment Administration (ARA) had, as of June 30, 1964, extended $27 million in loans to retail and service businesses related to recreation and to recreation enterprises.

The Rural Electrification Administration approved two loans totaling $133,000 for electric cooperatives to relend to their consumers to help finance electrical equipment for commercial winter recreation resorts.

Concessionnaires have been asked by the National Park Service to invest around $70 million over a 10-year period.[25] There are over 1,000 public service businesses owned by concessionaires operating under special-use permits in the national forests.[26] These businesses have annual net sales of about $60 million and represent a total of $100 million in capital investment. In 1960 the National Planning Association conducted a thorough examination of the concession system and concluded that the private sector is by far the most promising potential source of new funds for recreation facilities. State and local agencies have tended to rely much less than Federal agencies on the private sector in financing and managing facilities. However, State and local agencies may increase their efforts to interest private investors as the pressures for recreation facilities increase and additional capital outlay is required.

D. Needs and Prospective Capital Outlays

The potential for the private sector in providing outdoor recreation to the public is, in general, high.[27] However, this potential varies greatly, with the kind of recreation provided, the area involved, and will depend to a considerable extent upon what public policies are followed, especially by State and local governments.

About half of the private outdoor recreation enterprises surveyed reported a capital investment of less than $13,000.[28] Also, about 23 percent of the enterprises planned to expand their facilities within the next 5 years.[29] The types of facilities mentioned most frequently were lodging, picnicking, swimming, and camping. Eleven percent of the enterprises with decreased patronage planned additions or expansions of facilities in the next 5 years compared to almost 30 percent of those with increased patronage.[30]

One should be cautioned against overoptimistic projections. Nine-tenths of the enterprises reported on the relationship between capacity and number of visitors. Of these, 62 percent reported underuse of facilities on weekends, other than holiday weekends, during the 1964 season.[31] Average underuse was about 52 percent. Fourteen percent of the enterprises reported overuse of facilities, and 24 percent operated at capacity. Of the enterprises that could not have handled more people, about 64 percent reported that they did not lose or turn away people.[32]

[25] RAC study report, p. 68.
[26] "Outdoor Recreation in the National Forests." Forest Service, USDA, Agriculture Information Bulletin 301. September 1965, p. 71.
[27] RAC study report, p. 113.
[28] Chilton report, p. 8.
[29] Chilton report. Table 29, p. 34.
[30] Chilton report. Tables 27 and 28, pp. 32–33.
[31] Chilton report. Table 19, p. 24.
[32] Chilton report. Table 21, p. 26.