

Range. The natural environment of the valley and the beauty of the mountains are inseparably linked. Five large lakes, numerous smaller lakes, the Salmon River, beautifully situated campsites, excellent sites for winter sports development, and a spacious mountain and valley environment for hiking and horseback riding provide opportunities for intensive but not crowded use of the area.

The concentration of exceptional recreation and scenic values in the Sawtooth Mountains and adjacent valley lands warrants much greater emphasis on the management of these values than normally associated with national forest multiple use programs. We believe that the proposed national recreation area should be so established and administered as to provide the American people an opportunity to enjoy the maximum benefits from these lands.

Careful attention should be given to the proposed boundaries of the national recreation area to insure that the lands included in the area offer the best combination of the recreational and other values in the general area.

The proposed national recreation area contains approximately 22,000 acres of privately owned lands. We believe special attention should also be given to strengthening the provisions of the bill governing the acquisition and control of such lands in order that they may be fully protected and used when needed for public recreation purposes. The limitation in section 5(e) of the bill, for example, on the acquisition of private land to no more than 5 percent of the total privately owned acreage appears inadequate to assure the proper protection and use of the area.

We also believe that the establishment of the national recreation area should not preclude future consideration of the area for national park status. The National Park Service of this Department and the Forest Service collaborated in a study in August 1965 of the resources of the Sawtooth area. National park status was evaluated as one of the alternatives for administration of the area. In addition, the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments at its October 1966 meeting expressed an interest in the potential of the Sawtooth Mountains area as a national park, and expressed a desire to visit the area to consider further the national park qualities of the Sawtooth Range. Such a visit has not yet been made. Further consideration of a national park could well include the White Clouds Area to the east.

The Bureau of the Budget has advised that there is no objection to the presentation of this report from the standpoint of the Administration's program.

Sincerely yours,

DAVID S. BLACK,  
*Under Secretary of the Interior.*

Senator BIBLE. I first recognize the senior Senator from the State of Idaho, Senator Frank Church.

**STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK CHURCH, U.S. SENATOR FROM THE  
STATE OF IDAHO**

Senator CHURCH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

We appreciate the cooperation we have received from you in arranging for these hearings.

This bill, as you have mentioned, was introduced on March 14 of this year on behalf of myself and my colleague, Senator Jordan. As outlined in the agenda, the objective of this legislation is to assure preservation of the upland Sawtooth Mountains as wilderness, and to protect the scenic, historic, pastoral, fish and wildlife, and the other recreational values of one of the most uniquely beautiful areas of the American West.

There has been a lively argument for several years over how to best preserve this rugged and scenic section of central Idaho. Last year, however, sentiment crystallized in favor of a national recreation area for the Sawtooths.

Many Idahoans and Government officials historically have urged that a national park be established here. Bills proposing such a park have been introduced in Congress by the distinguished Senator James