

Like most of the ranchers in the area, I have spent all my life there. In general the development of the Sawtooth Valley has not been in conflict with the goal of preserving the scenic beauty of the area. Talk of creation of a national recreation area has not created any rush to subdivide land in order to frustrate the restrictions which may later be placed on undeveloped land, or in order to inflate property values for condemnation purposes. The people of the Sawtooth Valley are supporting the creation of a national recreation area on the assumption that it will not arbitrarily affect the reasonable use of their property. I hope that if such an area is created, this assumption will be justified.

Thank you for permitting me to appear here today.

Senator BIBLE. I want to compliment you, Mr. Breckenridge, for an unusually fine and very carefully considered and objective statement. This is one of the finest statements that I have been privileged to hear in my day's work on the Park Committee. You point out some of the problems that face us, and you make some suggestions for changes. And I think it is an outstanding statement.

Mr. BRECKENRIDGE. Thank you, Senator Bible.

Senator CHURCH. I want also to join in that, Mr. Chairman, and also to say that your objective and ours are certainly the same. We are trying to draft this bill in such a way that the people in Sawtooth Valley will not arbitrarily be affected in the reasonable use of their property. And if there are ways that words can accomplish this, and we can find them, those are the words that we will use.

Mr. BRECKENRIDGE. I believe this to be true, Senator.

Senator CHURCH. And you have been very helpful to us in fashioning this legislation. Your testimony earlier at Sun Valley was very helpful.

Senator BIBLE. Senator Jordan?

Senator JORDAN. I, too, want to commend you, John, on a very fine statement. Your testimony is constructive. And I assure you that we will look over your suggestions, and when we go into executive session to write up this bill, we will take them under serious consideration.

Just for the record, I noticed that you and your family have been in the valley a long time. How long has that been?

Mr. BRECKENRIDGE. About 47 years.

Senator JORDAN. Nearly half a century?

Mr. BRECKENRIDGE. Yes.

Senator JORDAN. I have been on your ranch. It is indeed a beautiful ranch. It shows loving care in the conservation practices that you have employed there to make it productive. It was raw sagebrush land when you went on there. And you put water on it and you seeded grasses on it to make a turf that looks like a golf course. It is a wonderful pasture improvement. And I want the record to show that you have improved the carrying capacity of that range—how much would you say over the original land?

Mr. BRECKENRIDGE. I would say that we used to operate about 600 ewes and their lambs, and maybe 25 head of pure-bred yearling rams. On just a few more acres, with the improvements that we have employed, we can now operate approximately 2,000 ewes, 5,000 to 7,000 feeder lambs, and in some years, 200 or 300 head of cattle, with the addition of approximately 160 acres to the original ranch.