

there is an increasingly urgent need for recognition of the outstanding scenic and wilderness qualities of the White Cloud, Boulder, and Pioneer Ranges to the East of the Sawtooths, and eventual inclusion of these areas into the National Wilderness Preservation System.

This summary of our historical position and particular concerns for the Sawtooth region make it plain that we do not believe that a Recreation Area designation is the best plan for the Sawtooths. The area unquestionably and unqualifiedly deserves National Park recognition and protection; the wilderness would be better protected in this way also. However, the Recreation Area designation provided for by S. 1267 can provide at least a substantial first step towards some degree of National recognition and protection for the Sawtooths.

Of particular urgency is the need to put a stop to the proliferation of ticky-tack subdivisions on the floor of the Sawtooth Valley which threaten to destroy irrevocably that magnificent and possibly unique sweeping view across the lush pastoral fields into the jagged high peaks. It appears that the provisions of S. 1267 relating to zoning of private property, and condemnation where necessary, will provide the necessary protection. For the fate of the Sawtooths, hope they will.

We are also concerned about the continuation of the exploitation of commodity resources within the Recreation Area in a manner incompatible with the extraordinary scenic and wilderness qualities of the region. The preamble of S. 1267 makes it plain that the purpose of the Recreation Area is "to assure the *preservation* of", and "to *protect*" the scenic, historic, pastoral, fish and wildlife, and other recreational values of the Sawtooths. (Emphasis added.) And yet, Section 3(3) provides that lumbering, mining, and grazing will continue where it does not "substantially impair" the purposes for which the recreation area is established. Our concern is with the word "substantial", which should be stricken from any final legislation. If the purpose of the Recreation Area designation is to preserve and protect the Sawtooths then it makes no sense to permit a continuation of uses which tend to destroy their scenic quality. To say these uses will not be permitted where they "substantially impair" the purposes of the recreation area, i.e., preservation and protection, is to admit that the continuation of these uses in any degree, particularly logging and mining, will probably have the effect of impairing the recreation area to some extent.

This does not make sense to us. If the recreation area is being set up to "preserve and protect", then no use should be permitted which will impair the area in any degree. The use of the words "substantially impair" gives far too much latitude to harmful exploitation of the area.

Of concern also to the Sierra Club and the Federation is the fact that S. 1267 makes no provision for immediate inclusion of the Sawtooth Primitive area and adjacent wilderness lands in the Wilderness System. We have long believed that designation of wilderness boundaries in the Sawtooths should come first, rather than a blanket classification of the entire area as "recreational". We hope that his bill will not be interpreted by the Forest Service as a mandate to go ahead and invade either the present primitive area or any adjoining de facto wilderness lands which might qualify for addition to it under the procedures of the Wilderness Act. At the very least, the bill should provide for a moratorium on any development of presently unroaded lands within the recreation area until a Sawtooth Wilderness has been established.

The Sawtooth mountain region, including not only the magnificent Sawtooth Range and its foreground areas, but also the White Cloud, Boulder, and Pioneer Ranges to the east, forms a scenic and wilderness complex rare in this nation, and perhaps unmatched in many ways. It deserves the highest degree of protection possible to preserve these qualities for the long-range benefit of present and future generations. We believe that National Park and Wilderness designation of large portions of the Sawtooth region will best do this job. We fear that a Recreation Area designation will not.

SOUTHERN IDAHO FORESTRY ASSOCIATION,
BOISE, IDAHO, August 8, 1967.

HON. FRANK CHURCH,
Senate Office Building,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR FRANK: I appreciated your letter dated July 28th regarding the Senate Sub-committee hearing on Parks and Recreation. This, I understand from your letter, is a public hearing August 23rd on the Sawtooth National Recreation Area.