

I am sorry that I will not be able to appear personally and submit a statement on behalf of the Southern Idaho Forestry Association.

Time seems to be of the essence in our business. I know that in a busy schedule you appreciate my problem.

Will you please file these statements at the August 23rd meeting on behalf of the Southern Idaho Forestry Association.

Thank you for your kind assistance.

Yours very truly,

Ted
THEODORE HOFF, Jr.,
President.

THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY,
Washington, D.C., August 22, 1967.

Senator ALAN BIBLE,
Chairman, Parks and Recreation Subcommittee of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR SENATOR BIBLE: This statement pertains to S. 1267, a bill to establish the Sawtooth National Recreation Area in Idaho, regarding which a hearing is to be held in Washington, D.C. on August 23, 1967. Please make this statement a part of the official record of that hearing.

The Wilderness Society is a national conservation organization of some 37,000 members who are actively interested in the preservation of America's disappearing wilderness resource.

The Wilderness Society, with its members and cooperators in Idaho, has long been identified with efforts to preserve the wilderness of the Sawtooth Primitive Area and contiguous undeveloped National Forest lands. The area has been visited frequently during the past twenty years by both society members and cooperators from other conservation groups who consider it one of the outstanding units of National Forest Wilderness in the United States. On September 4, 1963, Stewart M. Brandborg, our Executive Director testified at a public hearing in Boise, Idaho in support of a Forest Service proposal to establish the area as the Sawtooth Wilderness. On June 13, 1966, I testified before your Subcommittee in Sun Valley, Idaho on bills to establish a Sawtooth National Park and a Sawtooth National Recreation Area. Mr. Brandborg, who is a native of Idaho, and I have spent considerable time in Stanley Basin, the Sawtooth Valley, and the Sawtooth Primitive Area. We find the Sawtooths to be a wild and very beautiful high country that should be given statutory protection as wilderness at the earliest opportunity under procedures provided by the Wilderness Act of 1964.

We are impressed, also, with the great opportunity and the urgent need to preserve the natural aspect as well as the recreational and historical features of National Forest and private lands contiguous to the Sawtooth wilderness. For the most part, these lands represent the valley approaches, the foreground to the wilderness of the spectacular Sawtooth Mountains. They consist of lush meadows and foothills along the headwaters of the famous Salmon River. A number of beautiful natural lakes dot the landscape. White-faced cattle graze in log-fenced pastures, and ranch houses complete the picturesque western setting.

Management must provide for the protection of foreground landscapes. The pastoral Sawtooth Valley contrasted with the escarpment culminating in the jagged spires of the Sawtooth Mountains provides an impressive sight. One without the other sacrifices the natural character of the area.

The natural beauty and western setting of this environment is now threatened by unsightly commercial development of the valley lands. S. 1267, if enacted into law, will help preserve the scenic approaches by preventing development that is incompatible with the scenic and historical integrity of the area, and by providing for the acquisition of lands and scenic easements.

It should be emphasized, however, that while a Sawtooth National Recreation Area will protect the foreground to the wilderness of the Sawtooth Mountains, it will not preserve the wilderness itself. For most man-made developments which would be allowed under S. 1267 would destroy the Sawtooth wilderness if applied to the Primitive Area and contiguous wild lands. Clearly, the laws, policies, and regulations governing National Recreation Areas do not provide adequate safeguards to protect the integrity of wilderness. A National Recreation Area is no substitute for a Wilderness Area. Guidelines for a National Recreation Area control development, while those applying to a Wilderness Area are designed to prevent development. Only statutory protection as wilderness, in accordance with the Wilderness Act of 1964, can be expected to preserve the superb wilderness lands of the Sawtooth high country. Actually, the Sawtooth Wilderness Area, encompassing the present Primitive Area and contiguous wilderness lands should