

The CHAIRMAN. The differences between S. 1401 and Senator Harris' S. 2828 are readily apparent; S. 1401 would add gravely needed revenues to the land and water conservation fund; S. 2828 would result in reduced revenues for the fund by prohibiting the charging of any fees at Corps of Engineers water installations. However, the issue is not that simple and it well may be that an accommodation can be worked out in the way of more clearly defining those areas in which fees may be charged and the type and amount of such fees.

Now a few words concerning the background and purpose of these bills.

During the 88th Congress, we enacted several measures which have been hailed as milestones in the history of conservation legislation. Among these milestones were the Wilderness Act and the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, Public Law 88-578. Enactment of these measures was the climax of a number of years of great effort on the part of dedicated citizens and organizations.

The purpose of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, the provisions of which are based on legislation I had the honor to sponsor, is to help the States and the Federal agencies meet the ever-increasing needs and demands, present and future, of the American people for lands and facilities for outdoor recreation.

The act established a fund from which grants are made to the States, on a matching basis, for planning and acquisition of land and water areas, and for construction of facilities on them. A part of the fund is available for appropriation to Federal agencies, through established authorization and appropriation procedures, for acquisition of additional land and water areas.

I think there can be no doubt that this act has provided a tremendous stimulus to comprehensive recreation planning, and through it we have made significant strides toward fulfilling the existing needs. Unfortunately, we find that today the fund and its entire concept is in a state of crisis.

We all know our Nation has been experiencing an escalation in land prices in general, and a particularly alarming one in prices for recreation-quality lands. With increasing affluence, Americans are willing to invest more money in recreation lands, and these lands, being limited geographically, are selling for ever higher and higher prices.

It is common for the price of recreation land to double in 6 or 7 years and, in not too rare instances, to double in 4 or 5 years. This nationwide trend is accelerated when the Congress authorizes a national park or seashore to be created in the particular area.

Of significance, I think, is the fact that, while the originators of the land and water conservation fund did not intend that it be a "limiting" fund, in practice it has been just that. The Congress has seen fit to appropriate funds for recreation-land acquisition only up to the limits of revenues earned by the fund.

Each member of the committee has before him a copy of a study published last year delineating the land price-escalation problem. That study points out that the combined Federal-State-local needs for recreation-land acquisition and development by 1977 will exceed the income to the land and water conservation fund by \$2.7 billion. This figure was stated in prices current in 1966.