

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, gentlemen. We appreciate having your statement.

Mr. Edward P. Cliff, Chief of the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, is our next witness.

I think, Mr. Cliff, if it is possible for you to highlight your statement we could insert it at the end of your remarks in full. Some of it has already been covered previously. That would be of benefit to the committee.

**STATEMENT OF EDWARD P. CLIFF, CHIEF, FOREST SERVICE,
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Mr. CLIFF. I will be very glad to do that, Senator.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee: It is a pleasure to be here to express the Department of Agriculture's continued support of the purposes and objectives of the land and water conservation fund. We endorse S. 1401 with the amendments suggested by Secretary of Interior Udall.

We, too, have faced the problem of escalating prices in the purchase of recreational land in the national forest system, using land and water conservation fund money.

We have acquired with moneys from this fund about 134,000 acres. We have options for contracts on additional lands which fully obligate all the money that has been made available to us. We have either purchased or have under option some 206,000 acres.

We have experienced price escalation in the projects where we have been buying land. For example, in the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area, which was established in 1966, we have seen the average value of land almost double. That may be an exception.

Our experience is that prices where we are actively purchasing land have gone up about 10 percent per year. We feel the funds available to meet our needs have not been adequate. Even if the bill before you is passed, the proposed distribution of the funds to the Department of Agriculture would not meet our total needs as originally programed for the next 5 years.

The table showing the projected needs for a 10-year period which appears in the Department of Interior's report on price escalation would indicate that the distribution now proposed for the next 5 years would meet only about half our projected needs for this period.

We appreciate that during a period of budget stringency we cannot go as fast as we would like, and we endorse what Secretary Udall has said about other budgetary needs. This program has to fit into that.

We feel this is a step forward, and we want to let the committee know that the Department of Agriculture supports this measure with the amendments proposed by the Department of the Interior.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Cliff.

I have just one question. What has been your experience on administrative costs in connection with the collection of the user fees?

I notice in fiscal year 1966 on entrance and user fees it amounted to \$9,304, \$302,000 in 1967, and on December 31, 1968, \$428,075.

What has been your experience, generally, as to overhead costs?

Mr. CLIFF. Mr. Chairman, the Forest Service has followed what you might call a game-warden approach, and fee collections are made by all