

STATEMENT OF JOHN GREENSLIT, STATE LIAISON OFFICER, NORTH DAKOTA STATE OUTDOOR RECREATION AGENCY; ACCOMPANIED BY MILO HOISVEEN, STATE ENGINEER AND EXECUTIVE OFFICER, NORTH DAKOTA STATE OUTDOOR RECREATION AGENCY

Mr. GREENSLIT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee. I would like to reiterate the approval of the S. 1401 concept as mentioned, and also enter favorable testimony on Senate bill 2828 in favor of retention of the user fees by the Corps of Engineers. The program in North Dakota has been efficient. It has been acceptable and it has been a user fee charge, rather than an entrance fee charge.

I appreciate this opportunity to appear before you today on Senate bill 1401. The land and water conservation fund has provided Federal grants of \$2.3 million for outdoor recreation projects in North Dakota. We have obligated virtually all our apportionments and have proposals waiting now for release of the fiscal 1969 moneys.

Apportionments from the fund are certified to the States after the beginning of each fiscal year based on estimated receipts. So far the actual receipts have never measured up to the anticipations. Near the close of the fiscal year we find our apportionment is cut. It is very difficult to program projects on these fluctuating funds. When Congress passed the Conservation Fund Act it was anticipated that North Dakota would receive about \$1.3 million each year. We receive less than half that amount. Even at the reduced rate the fund has become very important to our State. We have been able to undertake a program that to date has provided about \$4.6 million in new outdoor opportunities. This is only the beginning. Demand in North Dakota is now estimated at \$50 million ahead of the supply and is continuing to grow at a fantastic rate. The cost of acquiring land and constructing facilities is also in an upward spiral. In many areas of our State, land must be purchased to provide a place for outdoor recreation. Every day of delay finds the price a little higher.

We have several areas that are outstanding for their scenic beauty or historic importance. These areas are rapidly becoming desecrated by man and their values will be forever lost. Our forests are being cleared at an alarming rate. We must act soon to place these types of areas into public ownership to save them for the future. Many can be saved and at the same time used for outdoor recreation.

Tourism is our fourth leading industry. If we can develop adequate attractions to entice more people to visit North Dakota it will be a great boon to our economy. Outdoor recreation is the key that can find tourism ranking second only to agriculture in North Dakota.

North Dakota has been a leader in the outdoor recreation program. Many States have patterned projects and policy after ours. We are proud of our State for the extreme interest that all of her people share in the outdoor recreation program.

The outdoor recreation needs of our people have been too long neglected. Adequate funding in the land and water conservation fund can assure that these needs will no longer be ignored.

North Dakota, and all the rest of the Nation, will benefit through increased and stabilized revenue for the land and water conservation