

West Virginia, a State with an abundance of outdoor recreation resources, has a deep interest in the conservation and orderly development of its outdoor recreation resources and the maximization of the benefits received from their usage; benefits which accrue not only to the residents of our State but also to the visitors from throughout the Nation who enjoy West Virginia's outdoor recreation resources.

West Virginia has, with financial assistance from the land and water conservation fund, been engaged in a planning program designed to analyze the supply of and demand for outdoor recreation opportunities in the State. This planning program has resulted in the formulation of the West Virginia Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan, which presents a program for meeting the outdoor recreation needs of our residents and a multitude of visitors from the heavily urbanized States surrounding West Virginia.

The immediate implementation of this program of development of the State's outdoor recreation resources is necessary due to urbanization, disappearing quality recreation lands, and escalation of both acquisition and development costs. Implementation of this program is estimated to require an investment of some \$42 billion by the State and its local governmental subdivisions during the next 5 years. Much of the success of this program hinges upon the availability of financial assistance from the land and water conservation fund.

Unfortunately since the inception of the land and water conservation fund, allocations to the States from the fund have fluctuated to such an extent that it has become extremely difficult, if not downright impossible, for the State to plan an orderly program based upon the utilization of fund assistance. For example, the 1967 fiscal year apportionment to West Virginia from the fund showed approximately a 40-percent decrease from the 1966 fiscal year apportionment, resulting in the curtailment of contemplated projects and escalated project costs due to the delay. This fluctuation in fund appropriations must be halted if the fund is to achieve the objectives the Congress envisioned in creating the fund.

It has become evident that the only way in which land and water conservation fund revenues can be stabilized is through an additional revenue source. It is our opinion that Senate bill 1401 would provide this needed stability to fund revenues by authorizing the utilization of revenue under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act of 1953, as amended, to augment current revenue sources.

It has also become evident that the land and water conservation fund at its present level of funding is inadequate to provide the States with the financial assistance they need to acquire high quality recreation lands before they are priced and developed out of existence. Urban problems have necessitated the acquisition and development of high cost lands in metropolitan areas in an attempt to improve the quality of the living environment of our urban dwellers. Immediate action is necessary if we are to avoid escalation of our urban problem, and while we realize that the United States presently has a great commitment to assist in improving the world's political environment, we also feel that the United States cannot ignore its commitment to improving its citizens' living environment. For this reason, again we support Senate bill 1401, which would raise the amount of assistance available from the land and water conservation fund. In