

Direct Federal Purchase and Ownership of Land

The Federal Government is the Nation's biggest landowner, owning one-third of the land. Most of it is in Alaska and other sparsely settled regions of the West. The Bureau of Land Management administers the largest acreage; other large landowners are the National Park Service, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, and the Department of Defense.

Recent studies, particularly the ORRRC report, have stressed the urgency of the need for urban open space acquisition and urged all levels of government to give priority to such acquisition. Programs of the Departments of Interior and Agriculture reflect the increased concern of the Federal Government with meeting open space needs of urban areas through better use of existing Federal lands and through acquisition of new areas.

DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR

National Park Service

Most of the national parks are located far from urban centers. However, more recently, the National Park Service has sought authorization for purchase of historic sites, recreation areas, and lakeshores and seashores of national significance where development pressures upon land are acute. Examples of national seashores acquired that are readily accessible to urban communities are Cape Cod, Point Reyes, and Padre Island.

The Cape Cod National Seashore is within 1 to 2 hours drive from Boston. Certain properties in the Cape Cod area will be acquired outright by the Federal Government for park use; other properties will be exempted from condemnation provided the owners accept special zoning restrictions; also, owners who sell their property may elect to retain use and occupancy privileges after the sale. Any rights of occupancy retained at the time of condemnation are attached to the land and may be freely transferred.

Point Reyes, located in an urban area with a 1959 population of about 4.5 million people, is a 35-mile drive from downtown San Francisco. It offers a 70-mile shoreline, sandy beaches, windswept coves, offshore rocks, coastal bluffs, lagoons, freshwater lakes, dunes, grassland, chaparral, pines and firs, and marshes. Unlike Cape Cod, it has had little residential development and is presently used for ranching, dairying, commercial fishing, and oyster culture. All of these uses will be permitted within the National Seashore. Approximately 27,000 acres will be acquired for public recreational use, while about 26,000 acres not abutting the shores of the peninsula will continue in private ownership, zoned for agriculture and used for beef and dairy cattle.

Padre Island, immediately to the south of Corpus Christi, Tex., is the longest unbroken and undeveloped seashore on the Atlantic or Gulf coasts. The Park Service will acquire 47,000 acres of dry land with 80 miles of shore. The acquisition will be in fee, subject to retention of oil and gas rights. Fish, shellfish, and birds abound in the waters and marshes near Padre Island and its isolated white sand beaches and dunes will provide a superb natural recreation area.

Before establishment of Cape Cod, Point Reyes, and Padre Island National Seashores, only 2 percent of the U.S. shoreline suitable for recreation was open to public use. Acquisition of almost 300 miles of shore at these three sites will increase the total to 2.5 percent. A further addition will be provided by the acquisition of portions of Fire Island on Long Island, N.Y. Still other seashore and recreation areas are proposed by the Park Service.

Bureau of Land Management

The Bureau of Land Management administers 466 million acres, most of which is remote from urban areas. Much of that part of the public domain which is near urban areas already is heavily used for recreation, in spite of lack of facilities. Some 50 recreation sites have been developed on the public lands in western Oregon since 1958, and \$1,400,000 of accelerated public works program funds has been spent in fiscal year 1963 to construct another 49 sites in economically depressed counties in eight States. Major projects under this program include sites and access roads in the Canyonlands region of southeastern Utah and in the Rio Grande Gorge north of Santa Fe, N. Mex., among others.

Senator KENNEDY. Before I conclude, let me point out what many have suggested is an anomaly in S. 1401. The revenues to be added to the land and water conservation fund would come in part from rents and royalties from mineral leases on the Continental Shelf.