

As you point out, this hearing should be a very helpful stimulant to these efforts.

Senator CHURCH. Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Any further questions of Senator Kennedy?

Senator ALLOTT. I would like to say one thing. You have a very fine statement here.

I am not sure at the moment that we have in this bill the answer to the escalating costs of the parks and recreation areas. I am thinking particularly of the speculation that occurs.

We have two sides of this situation here. One is to formulate some plan by which we can prevent the speculation and, at the same time, assure that Congress has complete control of where the contract purchases are made before they become public knowledge.

The mere authorization, of course, is always going to cause a certain amount of speculation. I don't think that the Appropriations Committee would look too kindly, either in the House or in the Senate, on the idea of just advance contract authorizations and appropriations unless these were pinned down to specific projects, as, for example, your Cape Code seashore or something of that sort.

We had this terrible experience with the Point Reyes situation, which started at \$14 million, as I recall, and the last time we appropriated, we authorized \$57 million. It doesn't require much imagination to see that just more dollars is not the answer to this thing, because in this one instance we have eaten up roughly \$40 million that could have been used in other areas for the purchase of lands and for the development of recreational aspects of our society.

The CHAIRMAN. I might say to my colleague that he has raised a very important point here. I think possibly the committee ought to give serious consideration to granting authority to the Interior Department to obtain options prior to authorization.

The truth of the matter is that sometimes it takes 1 or more years to get a bill through. It is passed in the House or the Senate, and then it will go over to the next Congress. In the meantime, the land speculators are at work. In fact, as soon as the bill is introduced, they start in. Some authority to obtain options, which, of course, would be cancelable, surely is worth exploring.

I am afraid that in many instances when we wait until the bill is actually authorized by law, the land values have escalated, even without an appropriation, to a point where the Government loses heavily.

Senator ALLOTT. I might add to that, if I may say so, the idea is that we ought to explore the concept. Since most of the States are so vitally interested in the development of these areas, perhaps some responsibility could be placed on the States to secure the options in the areas before all this national interest builds up in it and before the speculation starts.

Senator KENNEDY. In commenting on that, in the Cape Cod area we had some degree of speculation there. But just the natural increase in the value of the land there has escalated dramatically, for the whole Cape Cod area, not just surrounding the seashore.

Once again, this reaches the problem that not only do we have escalation from speculation, but a general increase of the land costs