

Assuming that Allegheny County gets its share of the doubled population which demographers say our nation will have by the end of the century, for a population of more than three million, unless action is taken now, we will have a recreation area deficit of almost 20 thousand acres.

That's the size of our problem, I might say, on land.

It's not the total problem.

We are an area which exists, historically, because of its rivers. Few other counties can boast such a whopping run of riverbank.

Along the river banks in the urbanized valleys, large industries give testimony to the important part water has played in our county's development and growth. Still other areas are dotted with homes and cottages. Often highways and railroads have crowded the rivers' edges. Weeds, a dump, or riverfront slums are in evidence occasionally.

Why is it that Allegheny County with its three rivers and all their islands and banks has as yet no riverside parks?

Partly because of the rivers themselves. Development of such recreation in the past has been all but impossible due to seasonal floods. Also, with the history of industrial use, the rivers have been polluted. Important too is the fact that until recent years there has been but little demand for water-based recreation.

But times are changing . . .

The County has in recent years directed a highly successful attack on river pollution. The rivers are being cleaned up. The County has also been effective in its drive for flood control measures that have greatly reduced this hazard. In the wake of these improvements has come an ever-increasing demand for more recreational use of the rivers.

Other cities and counties have found the need for extensive water-based recreation facilities. Philadelphia has elaborate plans underway for no less than three riverfront parks. Cleveland has plans to derive maximum recreational use of their lake frontage. The whole Chicago lakeshore has become a magnificent waterfront park and recreation area. On the Hudson River above New York City is an excellent boating area which is expanding yearly to meet the pressures of public demand. These are typical examples of the measures being undertaken by metropolitan areas to provide for the increasing need of their people for the recreational use of the water.

As a first look at such a river-park program, and in response to a growing interest and public demand for water-based recreation and boating, the Department made a study on the feasibility of acquiring and developing a Twelve Mile Island in the Allegheny River as a regional park facility.

On the Allegheny River alone, from the Highland Park Dam to the Harmarville Dam, approximately 1,000 boats, exclusive of sailing craft, are permanently moored, with an additional 400 launched each weekend in the summer. These boats are served by nine commercial docks, several exclusive boat clubs and other non-profit clubs. During the peak summer season on a good weekend, there are currently an estimated 4,000 craft on the Allegheny River between East Brady and the Point of the Golden Triangle. The launching facilities for even those who can afford them are woefully lacking not only in terms of future demand but in terms of present demand as well. For those who would like to launch their small skiff to fish, or a run-about to water ski, there are no public facilities.

If the work-week shrinks, as I believe it will, and vacation periods expand as they are already, I submit for your consideration the fact that we in Allegheny County who manufacture many of the components for space exploration, will find that our most complex space problem is not on the Moon but within the 757 square miles in which we live and work.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund administered by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation must be realistically funded at a level that will insure the programs we are all so vitally interested in.

NACO supports the enactment of S. 1401 and H.R. 8578; however, we do suggest that the total deficiencies needed to increase the Land and Water Conservation Fund be authorized by adding \$200 million a year for 5 years from unmarked receipts accrued under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act of 1953. We feel that both the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 and the national forests receipts should not be affected by this legislation.

In closing, may I again commend this committee for its work and for the opportunity to present this statement for the record, and would like to present you with copies of NACO's new publication, "Community Action Program for Outdoor Recreation."