

Mr. Chairman, the membership of the National Rifle Association now numbers more than 900,000 sportsmen and hunters, all of whom are vitally concerned over the problem of the rapidity with which the necessary space for hunting and other forms of outdoor recreation is diminishing. In this connection and as S. 1401 provides, the procurement of land now, in advance of escalating land values, is a badly needed program which we hope is made part of a master plan for husbanding our outdoors so as to insure adequate recreational space to satisfy both present and future needs. In particular, we wish to commend the wisdom, as established by this bill, of using funds derived from depletable natural resources to be reinvested in living natural resources.

The level of funding necessary for the financing of such a program should most effectively and logically be bound by the scope of land procurement programs authorized by Congress and money appropriated therefor. Therefore, if a ceiling on revenues which may be deposited in such a fund is established it should be in keeping with the requirements dictated by the input of authorized projects and in no way serve to hamper the efficient and effective operation of the fund.

The clearly defined procedure provided by S. 1401 with which to insure adequate funds to support such a program within the stated will of the Congress is exemplary and certainly requisite for the proper fulfillment of its aims.

The above recommendations, if enacted, will insure the establishment of new Federal, State and local recreational areas at a rate that is in keeping with present and anticipated population needs and permit the meeting of land price escalation problems by fixing priorities, as well as avoiding premature authorization of such areas with a delayed rate of land acquisition due to lack of funds.

In terms of public benefit, logic and good sound business sense, this proposed legislation ought to be made public policy and enacted into law. The National Rifle Association, speaking for a large segment of the users of land, desires to align itself with the National Wildlife Federation and others in full support of S. 1401.

Thank you, sir.

Senator BURDICK. Thank you very much.

Louis S. Clapper, Chief, Division of Conservation, National Wildlife Federation.

STATEMENT OF LOUIS S. CLAPPER, CHIEF, DIVISION OF CONSERVATION EDUCATION, NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

Mr. CLAPPER. Thank you, sir. I appreciate the opportunity to be here. I will go through our statement and touch on a few main points.

Senator BURDICK. The full statement will be made a part of the record, without objection.

Mr. CLAPPER. Thomas K. Kimball, my executive director, recently offered an article, a copy of which is attached, entitled "Milestone or Millstone," and this article poses a basic question. Is the land and water conservation fund more of a millstone around the neck of conservation projects than it has been a milestone of conservation achievement?