

OTHER PROBLEMS MERIT ATTENTION

Although passage of S. 1401 as introduced would solve the most immediate and significant problem confronting the national outdoor recreation program, other related matters also merit attention.

First, the annual permit and user fee provisions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund need reconsideration. Receipts have been far below original estimates and numerous administrative problems have arisen. We believe that the general concept of user fees for developed federal facilities is sound. Current proposals to abandon this concept should be opposed, and efforts made to develop and implement a more workable and equitable system.

Secondly, other mechanisms to provide flexible acquisition procedures for federal agencies should be considered. The advance contracting provisions of S. 1401 are a beginning, but are limited in both time and funds. Generally, as soon as public attention is focused on a potential recreation area of national significance, prices begin to rise, and continue to do so until acquisition. Possible solutions in addition to advance contracting include: pre-authorization option authority; limited continuing expenditure authority and advance planning appropriations. Traditionally, such administrative discretion over expenditures has been frowned upon by the Appropriations Committee and the Bureau of the Budget.

However, current policies which require specific appropriation for each Fund expenditure are unduly restrictive and more than a little unrealistic in the competitive race for recreational lands with today's energetic, flexible and innovative private real estate market.

Another possibility worth further study is the creation of a low-interest federal loan program to enable owners of key parcels to refinance, in return for their agreement to postpone development or sale of the land for a specified time. This would relieve the pressure on many land developers who generally are operating on a narrow cash margin and cannot afford to keep funds tied up in a tract for long periods.

Thirdly, means should be explored of providing pre-authorization acquisition for later "resale" at cost to federal agencies as appropriations become available. For example, Roger Revelle, director of the Harvard Center for Population Studies, has suggested creation of a federal land agency empowered and funded for this purpose. The recently created National Park Foundation will perform such a function for the National Park Service. Private philanthropy, through such organizations as the Nature Conservancy, represents a vehicle for public-private partnership action which should be encouraged.

As a final point, we suggest that consideration be given to allocation of potential federal receipts from western oil shale development to public land acquisition. This would be consonant with the concept of applying resource-derived revenues to resource development programs, and consideration could well be given now to this evolving opportunity.

In conclusion, The Conservation Foundation strongly supports S. 1401 as introduced, but suggests that this legislation be viewed as but one step toward a viable and dynamic program to meet the outdoor recreation needs of the American people.

We appreciate the opportunity of submitting this statement to the Committee.

STATEMENT OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS

This statement is filed on behalf of the National Association of Manufacturers, a voluntary association of business enterprises, large and small, located in every state.

We appreciate this opportunity to comment on S. 1401, to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, because it involves current issues of keen interest to industry and other taxpayers; that is, proper fiscal management of the federal government, and proper allocation of land resources among private owners and the various levels of government.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, Public Law 88-578, enacted on September 31, 1964, and effective on January 1, 1965, established a separate fund in the Treasury of the United States for the period ending June 30, 1989, and for such additional period as may be required to repay, without interest, advance appropriations made by the Congress into the fund as set forth