

developed strongly held views both for and against a Department of Natural Resources. Many administrative changes have occurred, however, since the organization of natural resources functions was last explored in depth; your exploration is therefore timely.

S. 886 would establish a Department having as its major purpose the development, utilization, and conservation of our natural resources. In addition to giving the Department of the Interior a new name, the bill would transfer to it the Forest Service and the watershed protection and flood prevention functions of the Secretary of Agriculture; the civil functions of the Army Corps of Engineers; the National Oceanographic Data Center and other functions of the Department of the Navy which are administered through the Center; the sea

to which agency would undertake a particular project has been based on a determination of the dominant project objective.

A similar evolution has occurred with respect to public lands and forests, which also are managed for multiple purposes.

The Forest Service was established by the Secretary of Agriculture in 1905, when the responsibility for administering the national forest reserves was transferred to him from the Secretary of the Interior. The transfer was made at the urging of conservationists, who believed that the Department of Agriculture would be more sympathetic with their conservation objectives. Interior, however, continued to be responsible for managing the national parks, other public lands, and the mineral resources of the national forests.

Both Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management now manage lands used for commercial timber production, grazing, mineral production, and outdoor recreation. Both Forest Service and the National Park Service manage great public recreation areas, let contracts for necessary service facilities, and supervise the operations of concessionaires. All three agencies have common problems, such as fire protection and pest control, which require joint action in many local areas.

The relationships inherent in water resources and land management functions are well illustrated in Agriculture's watershed protection and flood prevention for water production, protection of improved land and forestry management, and also require increasing consideration in developing comprehensive plans for river basin development. States also have activities similar to those of Federal agencies in outdoor recreation, fish and wildlife, and forestry.

PAST REORGANIZATION EFFORTS

In the Federal Power Act of 1920 Congress attempted through legislation to