

The Midvale district in its 30 years of existence has become a strong economic factor in the Riverton-Pavillion-Shoshone area and, for that matter, the whole Fremont County area.

Factors relating to soils and other physical features that were unknown or inadequately understood 30 years ago, as well as the effects of farm units too small for our present economic conditions all enjoined to give this project a handicap in keeping pace financially with deterioration of lands and structures. The people at Midvale have done a remarkable job in keeping this a viable economic base of the community. To secure this resource for the future it is vital that the completion and corrective measures detailed in S. 670 be incorporated into the plans of the Midvale district as soon as possible.

In July 1967 I submitted a letter to the Secretary of the Interior on behalf of Wyoming and our State game and fish department of our intent to participate in the fish and wildlife conservation and regulation on the Riverton project pursuant to the Federal Water Project Recreation Act. I believe firmly in the multiple-use concept anticipated here for the project.

For that matter, our State game and fish department has already spent about \$250,000 in developing game and fish resources within this project.

S. 670 provides the opportunity for a new start on a feasible basis on the third division. We have the opportunity to block out realistic units on the third division, and our experience from the past allows us to eliminate lands now known to be troublesome when under irrigation.

Return of these third division lands to private ownership, and to the tax rolls, will accrue to the financial benefit not only of the local governmental units but to the Federal Government as well. Experienced Midvale farmers are available to till the soils of the third division successfully.

The economic importance of this entire resource to a thriving community and the State is of vital concern to us, and, I believe, to you.

Other witnesses will testify before you in some depth as to the importance of completing the corrective process and maintaining this land and water resource in a sound condition. The Congress acted in 1964 to start the corrective process by enactment of Public Law 88-278. At this time the Congress recognized some needs in the Midvale district and suggested these needs be considered at a later date. Now is the time, and S. 670 embodies these considerations.

We believe the situation today, since enactment of Public Law 88-278, which concerned only the third division, creates a clean opportunity for sound resolution of the problems of the Riverton project.

This problem has been before you for several years. We believe that during this time much has changed. Soils are better understood and have been reclassified. Experienced farmers can make the Riverton project a strong economic unit if afforded the changes offered in S. 670.

I submit that S. 670 will resolve the problems before us, and I urge your favorable consideration of it.

Thank you.

Senator ANDERSON. At one time there was a recommendation that the farmers go off and leave the land. Is that different now?