

People like to get into some of these back areas, and if there are roadways or trailways, they can be used in the wintertime without damaging the terrain.

Snowmobiling could be permitted in these areas that we have proposed not be included. I don't think it would have any effect on the elk migrations in the areas themselves. The elk are wintering outside of these areas. They are down below.

The snowmobiles have access to these areas now. We may have to do something about controlling the use of snowmobiles on the winter elk ranges, but the winter ranges are outside of this wilderness or outside of any area that anybody has proposed for inclusion in the Washakie Wilderness.

Senator HANSEN. You are saying that this particular use might build up on these elk winter ranges to the point—

Mr. CLIFF. It could. They have to go through the wintering areas to get to the high areas, and there could be interference. But whether these wilderness proposals are approved or rejected there would be no impact on the elk wintering ranges.

Senator HANSEN. I want to get a little more information, if I may, on your timbering practices. I think I am somewhat familiar with the economic importance of timbering to Wyoming and the number of jobs that it provides. But I am concerned about the manner in which this timbering is being accomplished.

Do you think that there is any threat posed by your present timbering management practices to this area that I think is really in pretty delicate balance?

Mr. CLIFF. Well, I don't know what specific area you think is in delicate balance.

Senator HANSEN. The area from the East and West DuNoir Creeks, and the area that has been recommended by some for inclusion in the system, and the area which you do not recommend be included.

Mr. CLIFF. Certainly one of the things that we have been conscious of for many years is the watershed relationship. We don't want to do anything in the way of timber harvest or road construction or anything else which will damage watershed values. This consideration is paramount in our multiple use planning.

Senator HANSEN. Do you have the authority, sufficient authority, adequate authority, in your judgment, to take whatever steps are necessary in order to see that the total landscape is protected and held secure adequately?

Mr. CLIFF. Yes, we do. We have all the authority we need, and we exercise that authority. The greatest conflict between the timber harvesting and the maintenance of esthetics is the impact of certain harvesting practices on the landscape.

Some species, and lodgepole pine is one of them, are managed best through even-age management. This involves clear cutting in patches or strips, and this is objectionable and abhorrent to many people.

Clear cutting or patch or strip cutting temporarily disturbs the landscape. But it is the only way we can properly regenerate a disease-free forest in this forest type. Selective cutting of lodgepole pine results in diseased progeny if you have disease already established as we do in this area.