

PROPOSED LEGISLATION WILL DEFEAT VERY PURPOSE SOUGHT

Section 2 of H.R. 9162 describes the purpose of a National Wilderness Preservation System " * * for the use and enjoyment of the American people * * * "

However, use of such wilderness areas are to be made without motor vehicles and without roads, also without landing of aircraft, and the like.

Let's be realistic. Today, the American masses of people travel on wheels and wings, be it for business or pleasure, and not on foot or horseback.

Thus, this proposed legislation defeats the very purpose sought, by making vast areas of the public domain inaccessible to all but the wealthy few who are financially able to hire horses and guides to enjoy such wilderness areas.

A typical example of how most Americans enjoy the Nation's outdoors is the use made of Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming—the Nation's oldest national park.

Less than five percent of Yellowstone Park's area is used by the nearly two million visitors who come there from year to year. Within a half-mile walk from any road in the Park you will find the land as primitive as it was before white men came there nearly a century ago.

Therefore, if the proposed wilderness legislation is enacted, it will result in setting aside, so called public lands, for the private enjoyment of a few, representing less than two percent of the Nation's population. Such a condition relegates 98 percent of the people to second-class citizenship, in the use and enjoyment of the public domain.

Wyoming, the "Equality State", strenuously objects!

STATEMENT OF BAYARD D. REA, CASPER, WYO.

INTRODUCTION

I am an independent and consulting geologist residing in Casper, Wyoming. My residence in Wyoming totals nine years. I am a member of various conservation organizations and was Vice-President of the Wyoming Audubon Society two years ago. As a Director of that society I participated in the Washakie Wilderness hearing in Riverton, Wyoming on December 8, 1966.

STATEMENT

As a geologist actively involved in the exploration for and exploitation of natural resources on public lands and as an active supporter of conservation causes, I feel that I can appreciate both positions that have been presented regarding the definition of the proposed wilderness area; that of the U.S. Forest Service and that of the conservation groups. Having heard and read most of the arguments for and against the proposed additions and exclusions I should like to urge your serious consideration of the following points:

1. The drainage area of the Middle Fork of Wood River (Forest Service area 1) should be excluded. On the basis of the U.S. Geological Survey study (U.S.G.S. Bulletin 1230-E) and current mineral exploration, it seems likely that the Kirwin Area will experience renewed mining development at some time in the future. Since it already includes patented mining claims, the area would not logically fit the wilderness definition.

2. Most of the areas along the south edge of the present Stratified Primitive Area proposed by the conservation groups should be added, but their boundaries should be more logically drawn than has been done by either the Forest Service or the conservation groups. (See No. 3, which follows.) My reasons for recommending these additions are:

- (a) Protection of the watersheds from erosion of the steep slopes which might result from logging operations.

- (b) Protection of an important game habitat from disturbance by logging. The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission has clearly expressed this point of view and it should be respected.

- (c) Providing of desirable recreation areas which will be accessible to the average "automobile tourist" as well as the more adventurous "back-packers." It is becoming increasingly obvious that additional desirable camping areas must be provided in the vicinity of Yellowstone and Teton National Parks in order to alleviate the overcrowding of these parks. The upper DuNoir valleys would serve this purpose and should be protected for this use in the future.