

Now, I understand that has been discussed a bit. I would just like to add a word or two.

Northern States Power Co. is a very progressive, public-minded corporation; everybody who knows them would call them a topnotch, high-grade corporate citizen. They acquired this land a half century ago. They have preserved it without any kind of commercial development or exploitation for almost a half century. They have been interested in that river as they are interested in the communities they serve. They recognize it as a great river, a great asset.

When I was Governor they were discussing at that time, 6, 7, 8 years ago, back as early as 1959, I believe, with our conservation department, a program of preserving that shoreline. I believe they discussed it on the Minnesota side with the Minnesota Conservation Department. So, discussions have been underway with our conservation department and now with the Department of the Interior over a period of the last 10 years. Time and again they have demonstrated their interest in seeing that this river is preserved in its natural state.

Their board of directors has not acted on this. I do not, of course, speak for them, but the board of directors has authorized their appropriate vice president to carry on discussions about this with the Interior Department. They are meeting, in fact, today in Minneapolis for some further discussions. This will be their second meeting.

If something could be worked out by which—it would be a brand-new concept but I think it is a magnificent one—by which this company would hold on to its land, to manage the land itself under the regulations of the Interior Department, and get the proper recognition for its efforts. I think it would be a really magnificent breakthrough and a good example which might be followed by other public-minded corporations around the United States and help us in instances like this solve some problems in terms of resource preservation.

I am hopeful that this can be worked out, but it is still in the discussion stage and I, of course, don't speak for them. Hopefully, they will have some kind of a proposal that they will be able to present to this committee prior to the markup of the bill. And that is the most I think anybody can say about it at this moment.

One more point, and that is all I think I need to make. It may or may not have been covered.

In the Senate-passed bill, as you are aware, the idea is that 100 acres a mile could be acquired in fee which if you meandered it the same distance from the river, would be 400 feet on each side of the river, each mile. I assume the concept is that you might want 200 feet some place, and 500 another, and 100 here and there, depending upon what the integrity of the shoreline of that river required, but in any event, the idea is that 100 acres a mile would be acquired by fee or by easements in perpetuity.

The next provision in the bill is that the appropriate Secretary may acquire easements not to exceed 220 acres a mile in addition to the 100 acres in fee or easement. In that case you are talking then about a strip of land 2,600 feet wide each mile or 1,300 feet on each side of the river.

I just want to make one comment about this. The price estimates that Interior will give you today, if it is today that they are appear-