

Senator NELSON. Yes, I do. That is a really spectacular river, I think. It was up to the Menominee Indians to preserve it for all of history since it was a part of their reservation. Indians have a great respect for nature and its resources, so nothing was built on that river for 30 miles through the reservation.

The reservation then became a county, a few years back, while I was Governor. Nothing has been put on the river yet. Well, one structure that I know of. The river has been preserved.

The State in anticipation that there would be a wild and scenic rivers system is now leasing 30 miles of the shoreline of that river on both sides from the Menominee Indians for \$150,000 a year in order to keep it from being sold for lots. It would qualify for inclusion in this system and it is a magnificent river.

I might make one more point that might be interesting to you. If you look on page 32—we had this picture in color and I wish I had brought it along—on page 32, the lower righthand corner, you see an aerial picture of the St. Croix at its confluence with the Mississippi near Prescott, Wis. When you look at it in color you see the beautiful clear blue clean St. Croix and you see the muddy Mississippi. In black and white you can even see how dramatic the difference in the quality of the water of the two rivers is. The St. Croix is just about the last river, it is the only one I can find—maybe Mr. Crafts knows of one—situated close to a metropolitan area in America that is still unpolluted. That is not because of planning but because Minneapolis and St. Paul grew up on the Mississippi instead of the St. Croix.

Mr. TAYLOR. Any other questions? If not, we thank you for your very fine testimony.

Senator NELSON. I thank you for your kindness.

(The prepared statement of Senator Nelson follows:)

STATEMENT OF HON. GAYLORD NELSON, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF WISCONSIN

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am pleased to have the opportunity to appear before you today. My reasons for coming here today are twofold. First, I want to endorse and support the concept of a National Rivers system to preserve and protect some of our nation's great rivers and secondly, I want to urge you to consider the inclusion of the St. Croix and Namekagon Rivers in Wisconsin and Minnesota in the initial National Rivers system.

This nation's great rivers are an integral part of our national heritage and have played a significant role in making this country great. Many of our great rivers—the Mississippi, the Colorado, the Hudson, the Rio Grande, the Missouri, the Suwanee, the Susquehanna, the Shenandoah—are steeped in history and are deeply ingrained in our folklore and culture.

These rivers—and many more—were the routes followed by the pioneers as they moved west, and as our great nation grew, they became the backbone of our commerce and transportation. Beyond this, our rivers are the sources of water for many of our great cities, and they afford many of our citizens unequalled recreational opportunities.

Yet, today most of these rivers are threatened by pollution which kills the fish in them and makes them unsafe for swimming or water skiing and by tasteless development along their banks which destroys their great natural beauty. We have, it seems to me, a unique opportunity to save at least some of our once great rivers by establishing a National Rivers system. We ought to take advantage of this opportunity for it might well be our last chance.

The establishment of a National Rivers system would be an excellent complement to our existing system of parks, recreation areas, seashores and lake-