

STATEMENT OF HON. ALBERT H. QUIE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF MINNESOTA

Chairman Taylor and distinguished members of the Subcommittee, it is a privilege for me to have this opportunity to appear before you today and to express my wholehearted support for pending legislation designed to reserve and preserve certain of our great riverways and their adjacent lands by establishing a National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

As you know, I have authored and introduced a bill identified as H.R. 6289, to establish the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway in my own State of Minnesota and in neighboring Wisconsin. It is my understanding that the purpose of my legislation can and will be accomplished with the passage of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System legislation now under consideration by this body. For, with the refinements in definitions and classifications that have been made since the Senate approved legislation to create the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway during the last session of this Congress, it now appears more appropriate to include this proposal as an integral part of any National Rivers System.

The expansion of the term "wild" river and the addition of the "scenic" river concept are wise and certainly essential if we are to accomplish our goal of maintaining certain of our great rivers in their natural and unspoiled state for the enjoyment of present and future generations. The St. Croix and its tributary, the Namekagon River, possess unique scenic and natural values that qualify them for inclusion with each of these respective categories. The peculiar problems of satisfying simultaneously public recreational interests and protecting local property rights and the promoting of local and State development interests can be resolved, it seems to me, by designating the lower St. Croix as a "scenic" river and the upper limits as a "wild" river—with the appropriate development of each.

This dual designation of the St. Croix and its Namekagon Tributary and their proposed inclusion in a National Rivers System continue to enjoy widespread support in Minnesota. Minnesota authorities are anxious to cooperate with their Federal counterparts in a joint effort to preserve the natural attributes of this riverway.

I respectfully urge, therefore, that the Subcommittee give favorable consideration to legislation to establish a National Wild and Scenic Rivers System—a system that will assure that the St. Croix River and other great natural landscapes will continue to be sources of scenic beauty and recreational pleasure—and will not vanish into oblivion.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN A. BLATNIK, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE  
STATE OF MINNESOTA

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of a National Scenic Rivers System which would include the St. Croix River. We all know and recognize the great importance of protecting and preserving our rivers with special beauty for future generations. I congratulate the committee for holding these important hearings. These hearings provide a real forum to air the opinions of those affected. Your hearings represent a cross section of witnesses. They include people who actually use the river or intend to use it. These witnesses include industrial as well as recreational interests.

The outdoorsman's paradise aspect of this scenic river has been described by my colleagues, Representative Fraser, Senators Nelson and Mondale and others. I agree that there is a definite need to protect and preserve such scenic beauty on certain portions of the river. Certainly the clean water of the St. Croix is a rarity in 1968 when we find virtually all of our rivers poisoned in some degree by pollution.

I have long fought for conservation of our natural resources. The St. Croix truly represents one of the most scenic waterways in the Midwest. Our Special Subcommittee to inspect flooded areas in the Upper Mississippi River Basin visited this area in early 1965. The estimate at that time of the total flood damages including emergency costs was about \$5 million in the St. Croix Basin. There is currently a study under way to determine the feasibility of flood control improvements in this area. I mention this only by way of pointing out the complexities of conservation and water management.

I feel certain that the thorough hearings that are being held on this subject matter will result in an excellent bill when it is reported out of committee. Many Americans will be grateful for the foresight that is being displayed by this committee.