

actively considered in the Senate. This would authorize studies, research, and tests for increasing water use from atmospheric sources.

Public Law 82-448 and Public Law 90-18 deal with water desalinization so we may use water that is now saline and so we may eventually reuse our water resources.

In addition to national interest there is great activity at the State and regional level. Eleven Western States have implemented a Western States Water Council through which they hope to pursue cooperatively long-range planning objectives. The Northwest States have for many years been discussing a Columbia Basin Interstate Water Compact. We do have some compacts with other States which have been approved by the Congress.

In Idaho the citizens voted an amendment to the State's constitution to create a State water agency charged with the study and inventory of the State's water and land resources, in order that planning may proceed in an orderly and comprehensive way.

I believe we all recognize that once a river is officially designated as "wild" or "scenic" or "natural," that classification will be most difficult to change. One need only point to the unsuccessful efforts to change the boundary of a national park or even a wilderness area. One must assume that the rivers selected will be free-flowing in perpetuity.

Therefore we must be sure that we have all the facts and information before we commit them. We cannot limit our research to a particular river alone. Just to say "Here is a beautiful, free-flowing river—let us always keep it so" is not enough.

We must consider also the alternate uses of this river, the options, if you please.

We must consider a river in its total context—including its relationship to the other water supplies of the area and to the total economy of the State or region. Only then will it be possible to strike a proper balance between preservation and development. Only then will it be possible to make a lasting judgment as to the highest and best use of a river resource.

I have studied the Battelle report, an economic and social evaluation of establishing portions of the Salmon and Clearwater Rivers in Idaho as wild rivers. I am frank to say this study was entirely superficial. It is limited to a study area of approximately 231 miles of stream and 924 square miles of adjoining land. Little or no consideration has been given to the possibility of flood control downstream or to the effect the designation of the Salmon River as a wild river would have on the Snake River Basin which joins it on the south.

Until further studies are made, we do not know how many acres of Idaho land have potential for irrigation and we do not know definitely what our water needs will be. We now irrigate about 3.4 million acres and it is estimated that 4 to 6 million more acres can be put under irrigation. Most all of it is in the Snake River drainage.

But how about water for such an irrigation potential? Dependable water supplies must be available in the most critical water years, not just the average years, Mr. Chairman, but in our critical water years. In our 6 years of lowest water less than 8 million acre-feet of water flowed by the gage at Weiser, Idaho. There are downstream commit-