

area of 187 million acres located in 41 States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico which are available to meet the recreational and economic needs of the Nation. Full use and enjoyment of this important public property is entirely dependent on an adequate transportation system of roads and trails.

All Federal-aid highways serve the national forest system either directly or indirectly. The entire system serves as the vital connection between our forest and grassland resources and the people and industries of the Nation. We have a very special interest in forest development roads and trails for which H.R. 16994 and H.R. 17134 would authorize appropriations. Section 5(5) of these bills would authorize the appropriation of 125 million for each of fiscal year 1970 and for fiscal year 1971 for forest development roads and trails. Funds under this authorization are appropriated directly to the Forest Service.

We have the responsibility for maintenance of over 160,000 miles of existing forest development roads, and over 101,000 miles of existing trails and for construction of new roads and trails needed in the national forest system. Many more miles of roads are needed for full development of the resources.

In 1961, President Kennedy sent to the Congress "A Development Program for the National Forests." That program set forth the resource management and development work needed in the national forests during the 10-year period 1963 to 1972. The estimated cost of road and trail construction in that program was approximately \$1.7 billion, of which \$1.2 billion was to come from appropriated funds. We are currently far behind in this program. We are behind planned needs while at the same time we are finding that the 10-year program was based on conservative estimates of expected use of the national forest system.

The nationwide importance of the national forest system continues to grow. For instance, recreation use has grown to almost 150 million visitor-days in fiscal year 1968. A "visitor-day" is the new term which has been adopted by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation for use by all Federal agencies to measure recreation use. Based on this measurement the Forest Service provides more recreation use than any other Federal agency. In the commodity field this year the national forests will produce 33 percent of all of the veneer and sawlog volumes used by the entire important timber industry in the United States. This is a dramatic increase over the 17 percent produced on the national forests in 1955—only 12 years ago. It is approximately double. These increased contributions of the national forest system resources to the health, wealth, and economy of our Nation can only be sustained by the betterment and extension of the forest development road and trail transportation system.

I believe I would be derelict in my duties as Deputy Chief of the Forest Service if I didn't point out to you that we are in some pretty challenging times in managing our transportation system. Your support of this bill is needed if we are to continue to make progress. The problems are many and complex. They include building access roads to keep the dependent mills supplied with logs and thus have them add to our economy. They include replacing stock driveways with roads on which stock can be trucked to and from the national forest ranges to protect critical watersheds in such areas as the Boise National Forest