

My proposal is not exclusively prospective and I would hope we would get at that question and get at it this year.

In looking at the statistics I think the figures on reclamation are misleading in that, of the 34 percent of land restored, the figure presented in the slide, about half of that was natural restoration, but, as we all know, if you take a look at natural restoration it is really a kind of a green lie.

When you look closely it is crabgrass and quack grass and brush and there isn't much of any value in terms of human recreation and there isn't any value in terms of adequate resources for the survival of wildlife.

I have seen some English sparrows and some rodents, but that is about all that can survive in that land, so the natural restoration in most cases that I have seen really doesn't amount to anything except that there is some green growth and from a distance it looks all right. It doesn't have any recreation value for anybody, either recreation or economic value in terms of grazing.

The question I have here is, Why doesn't this bill include the Agriculture Department, with the Forest Service and the Soil Conservation Service, because, unless I am mistaken, almost all of the expertise in the Federal Government in terms of watershed management, forestry and soil reclamation, is in the Soil Conservation Service. In the past 5 years the Soil Conservation Service has worked with some 5,000 cooperators in about 500 districts in some 31 States and reclaimed 127,000 acres of mined land.

I am wondering why we don't include the Secretary of Agriculture and all of the expertise of that Department as part of a cooperative effort along with your Department in this program.

Mr. UDALL. Senator, let me answer your question in this fashion. I think the legislation you proposed, as is usually the case, is highly constructive.

I wish the overall budgetary picture were such that I could do battle successfully as I wanted to do downtown with regard to a program of this kind. I can't think of a better way to put the unemployed core at work in this country today—this is exactly what we did in the depression with replanting of forests and other things—than to restore the damaged lands, because then we are building back the capital base of the country. I hope that we can move on this front fairly soon.

Confronted with the situation that we have today, however, I think this legislation does represent a big step forward. With regard to the Department of Agriculture and its expertise, in soil conservation in particular, when we get to the problem of the restoration of these lands that need to be reclaimed because of the policies of the past, there is serious discussion within the administration as to where this responsibility should lie.

I don't want to detract in any way from the fact that I have the very highest regard for the Soil Conservation Service, and for the Forest Service, in terms of their conservation management.

We have expertise of our own in Interior, and all of us are going to have to decide at some point whether to work on this together—as we did on most aspects of the report—and where that lead responsibility should rest. I certainly feel, because of our own knowledge of the mining industry and its problems, of our own concern for water pollution and our responsibility for pollution control, of our overall