

in the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Soil Conservation Service, the agency which I represent.

We are, of course, deeply concerned, as are all of the soil conservation districts, with critical areas, whether they be roadbanks, streambanks, strip mine areas, that are contributing sources of pollution and sediment to our streams and also adversely affecting ongoing farming operations.

The soil conservation districts within their present capabilities and authorities have, as has been pointed out, made a very substantial effort to get on top of this problem by working with their own individual cooperators to restore lands wherever possible to a productive use. In many cases these lands have been put back to cropland, pastureland, or planted with trees. In some cases they have been devoted to other uses such as reclamation for industrial development.

We treat this problem as we do all problems on individual landowners' properties. That is, in attempting to decide with the landowner, recognizing his final decision and recognizing that he has to put the major share of the financial input into the project, those uses which will contribute the most to not only his particular operation, but in many cases to the improvement of the entire community and State.

District supervisors in those 500 districts previously mentioned, and in fact all districts, are very much concerned about the rate at which this is accomplished. In my own knowledge they have devoted a great deal of time to attempt to find ways of speeding up how they can actually restore some of these lands to a more productive use.

There is no doubt but what we would be extremely happy to make this expertise available, not only in terms of problems that relate to the future, but we also are, of course, concerned about the restoration of lands which have been previously strip mined. Thank you.

Senator METCALF. Senator Nelson?

Senator NELSON. No questions.

Senator METCALF. Thank you for an excellent presentation. You are already aware of the high regard that your agency has with all of us here. Do you have any further statements, Mr. Secretary?

Mr. BAKER. No, sir; I believe not, thank you. We appreciate very much the fine statements that have been made here by members of the committee. I only hope that we have deserved them and our future work will deserve them. We appreciate it deeply.

Senator METCALF. I suspect some of the slides that Mr. Finch showed were the results of the activity of the Soil Conservation Service and the Forest Service in restoring and reclaiming some of this land. So you don't need a photographer. You have people who recognize your capacity already.

Mr. BAKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator METCALF. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.

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