

We are pledged to the planning of mining activities, where practical, so that the land involved shall help meet the esthetic and practical needs of the community.

That declaration was a signal for the phosphate industry, collectively, and individually, to meet the challenge of land restoration.

Thus began a concerted effort by the industry to formulate plans before mining, to make reclamation more feasible, to find better methods of reclamation, and to seek ways of making reclamation economical.

Adhering to this self-governing policy, phosphate miners embarked on a widespread land reclamation effort that has earned the industry compliments from throughout the Nation, and brought envy from other surface miners in other parts of the country. The sincerity displayed in carrying out this pledge is demonstrated by the dramatic results. During the 6-year period between 1961 and 1967 the phosphate industry reclaimed or restored to beneficial use more than 15,000 acres of mined-over phosphate land. This figure represents reclamation or restoration of land equal to nearly 70 percent of the land mined during that entire period.

These figures do not include hundreds of acres purchased and reclaimed by private developers, nor do they include large acreages donated or leased on nominal terms to the Audubon Society and other conservation groups.

In many instances these tracts were left in rough condition purposely for the benefit of fish and wildlife propagation. Ducks and other waterfowl abound in the lakes and pit areas resulting from mining.

This outstanding effort by the phosphate industry has not gone unnoticed.

The New York Times on Sunday, March 5, 1967, identified the Florida phosphate industry's land reclamation program as an "industry miracle" and proclaimed that the "phosphate companies in Polk County, Fla., mend their ways; reclaim blighted areas for recreation: beautify land."

The same article went on to say that the phosphate mining industry has pursued a program of land reclamation and landscape engineering that possibly has had few, if any, equals in any other mining areas of the United States.

Not only have community relations been greatly improved but the area also has become a pleasanter and more attractive place for both residents and visitors.

In July 1967 the nationally known McGraw-Hill publication, *Engineering and Mining Journal*, devoted six pages and a color photo cover to the Florida phosphate industry reclamation effort.

*Engineering and Mining Journal* labeled the industry's voluntary reclamation approach as "Mining's Green Thumb" and went into detail about preplanned mining, and said that reclaiming of phosphate is more economical, creates usable land from what once was considered useless swamp, and develops property for housing, recreation, conservation, food production or forest products.

The journal commented on the industry's tremendous economic contribution to the area and then noted what is not commonly appreciated, the additional dividends contributed by the industry in the