

I know from my own experience in Montana, that we are doing something.

Industry and the States are taking care of some of this surface mining pollution at the present time and the greatest evil is the so-called orphan lands that have been abused, exploited, and abandoned in the past.

The gold dredges have been up and down the streams of Montana and there are still scars there after many years, whereas new mining operations have been reforested or reclaimed and smoothed off. I think it has been helpful, during the course of this testimony, to have statements such as yours point out the special needs in various areas. I agree with Senator Fannin we are moving into new developments in oil shale, perhaps significant production there, and at least there we have an opportunity to do what we did in the coal lands of Appalachia. A little planning at the State level and some research and consideration will prevent the destruction of the environment as was done in some cases in the past.

Thank you very much, Mr. Tippy.

Mr. TIPPY. Thank you.

(The statements referred to follow:)

STATEMENT OF ROGER TIPPY, REPRESENTING THE IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA

Mr. Chairman: I am Roger Tippy, Assistant Conservation Director of the Izaak Walton League of America, a national organization of persons interested in conservation and outdoor recreation. I thank you for this opportunity to present our views on the relationship of surface mining to environmental quality.

Briefly, we believe surface mining practices must be regulated by governmental authority in order to prevent serious damage to the environment. We recognize that the seriousness of the problem varies widely from one region to another, from one mineral to another; even within the coal industry we find area strip-ping involves far fewer problems than contour stripping. This does not mean contour stripping on the Appalachian ridges is the only serious surface mining problem today. Florida phosphates, Maine zinc and copper, and Colorado oil shale, are just a few of the other mineral deposits which are creating or may create severe disruptions of the natural environment. We therefore respectfully submit that all surface mining activities should be covered by any Congressional legislation on this subject.

APPLICATION OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

Nationwide standards governing surface mining practices would, under certain conditions, be desirable. National standards would keep the mining industry competitive in states which have already moved to control the abuses of surface mining, and states now lacking effective controls would be encouraged to provide them. However, if federal standards are not going to require as much control as the most effective state laws now in existence, we do not favor national legislation. The single most serious surface mining problem—contour strip mining for coal—is now under fairly effective regulation in the states where it is most widely practiced. Weaker federal standards would bring strong pressure to relax these existing state laws and regulations.

The administration bill, S. 3132, is the only bill which does not propose publicly announced federal standards before a state response is required. This provides the flexibility needed for surface mining regulations: each state's plan can be evaluated in terms of its particular topography and mineral resources. On the other hand, many states whose experience with surface mining problems may be meager would probably prefer some form of advice as to what sort of regulatory scheme would be acceptable. Section 7(a) of S. 3132 sets out a few general indications of acceptability; these principles are not an adequate statement of all the general principles any regulatory scheme should include. We suggest specifically that they should further include recognition: