

General NOBLE. It is absolutely essential, sir. Without this project, the park is going to wither away. It needs water.

Mr. CLAUSEN. Would that fall into the category of damage prevented, such as you have had in other projects?

General NOBLE. It is to provide water for the park. There have been statements made, and there are people who believe that over the years the man-made works in southern Florida have acted to hurt the park, and I suppose to a degree that is true—new drainage will tend to lead water away from the park. It is not necessarily true to the extent of some of the allegations.

Mr. CLAUSEN. Would you briefly clarify that. If this project does not go forward, what adverse effect would it have on the Everglades National Park?

General NOBLE. Well, if it does not go forward, sir, it would not provide water that this project is designed to provide to the park. Water for the park is a major project purpose embodied in this plan.

Mr. CRAMER. May I ask a question there. If that is the case, why is the 20 percent local cost attributed also to the benefit accruing to the park? You are requiring local interests to put up 20 percent of the total cost—when you say the greatest portion of the benefit is to the park. Now, how do you justify that?

General NOBLE. I did not mean to imply greatest portion, sir. I meant a major part of it. It is a major project purpose. This is a chart from the report that spreads out, by layers, the various elements. The cross-hatched layers, which increase in amount over the years, is water for the needs of Florida.

This layer represents the amount of water allocated to the park.

Mr. CRAMER. What percentage is that?

General NOBLE. Fifteen percent, something like that.

Then on top of that, you have these extra floodwaters, which are over and above allocated requirements of central and southern Florida and any increment laid down for the park. The park is willing and anxious to take any amount of water that is available.

Mr. CRAMER. Is that the water made available or the value of the project of the Everglades?

General NOBLE. That is the water made available.

Mr. CRAMER. Why should not 15 percent of this project be that of the Federal Government a hundred percent relating to benefits to the Everglades?

General NOBLE. I do not believe that the local people are paying for the Everglades' water.

Mr. CLAUSEN. This water for the Everglades, is this to supplement water that either drains out of the area, or evaporates? I do not know that I have clear in my mind as to why you have to have the supplemental water resource. You say it is needed for the park, but why?

General NOBLE. Well, if the environment of the park is to be preserved, it is the judgment of the National Park Service that they need 315,000 acre-feet per year to maintain the environment of the Everglades National Park.

Mr. CLAUSEN. Is this the natural environment?

General NOBLE. Yes.

Mr. CLAUSEN. What would cause the water supply to diminish?