

the Rappahannock is magnificent. The Commonwealth of Virginia, by an act of the 1968 General Assembly, has begun a study of scenic free-flowing Virginia rivers and this study is already evaluating the Rappahannock. Here is another reason for deferring action on the dam—the State may find preservation a higher use of the river.

Mr. Chairman, the league wishes someone—either State or Federal—would publicly present the answers to two key questions about the recreational aspects of the project:

1. What are the alternative public actions which might be taken to protect and enhance the scenic, historic, and recreational values of the Rappahannock-Rapidan country?

2. What alternative recreational uses might be made of the \$23,370,000 capital outlay allocated to recreation in the Salem Church plans? In other words, if the Virginia Outdoor Recreation Commission were given \$23,370,000 to spend in the Fredericksburg-Warrenton region, how would it use the money?

We recognize that the Federal agencies considered “alternatives” to the Salem Church recreation plan, but these alternatives were calculated according to restricted ground rules. Indeed, one could argue that they are not alternatives at all. The question here is what are the possible different uses of the river, now how to support a given number of visits.

We have questions in other areas:

On water supply, we believe the public ought to have full details on alternative projects as developed by Federal, State, or local agencies. Supply needs can be met for less than half the \$5,363,000 allocated to this purpose in the Salem Church proposal. Fredericksburg study made last year showed its water needs could be met until the year 2000 through construction of a \$2 million project. The city together with Spotsylvania and Stafford Counties, are now vying to implement this plan, and thus finance their own water supply.

The point, again, is that Salem Church was receiving primary local support because of a water supply problem soon to be obsolete—yet only 6 percent of the project's total cost is assigned to this purpose.

On flood control, the Corps' calculations are again out of date. The newly announced municipal storage system will provide some protection against floods. In addition, we wonder how the \$4.2 million allocated for this purpose might otherwise be employed to reduce the flood problem. As we read the report, flood control benefits run lower than costs unless increased land values—due to the flood control—are taken into account. It seems to us such calculations mean that intensive development of the Rappahannock flood plain will be encouraged by government—yet, we are aware that national costs of flood damage are constantly rising in spite of vast public flood control expenditures.

The Corps report suggests that flood-susceptible areas of Fredericksburg and Falmouth are not today “desirably” developed—being instead in vacant lot, low industrial, and “substandard housing” use. Perhaps something else of public value could be done to this area rather than provision of imperfect flood protection. Could, for instance, the \$4.2 million plus some of the recreation money, if necessary, be used to purchase these flood plains and turn them into attractive urban parklands—which might themselves stimulate private investment in “desirable” types of development on higher ground?