

fact is that the additional supply was not contemplated by the corps in its report, and a surplus of some proportions will exist through the year 2020, and probably beyond. Some time ago, the executive director of the Wabash Valley Interstate Commission stated publicly that no water would be needed by the Indianapolis from Big Walnut until after the turn of the century; and that view was expressed even before the water company's Mud Creek plan was known. Clearly, there is no imminent need of the corps' Big Walnut project for water supply in the foreseeable future. But even if such a need could be shown, the amount of such water from Big Walnut could be reduced by some quantity which recognizes the flows which will come from Mud Creek. This fact reopens consideration of Big Walnut alternatives which would be smaller and much less expensive, and which would preserve the natural qualities of the upper valley intact. Among the major objections we have heard is that some of these alternatives would provide less water than the project desired by the corps. However, a lesser quantity should now be acceptable, at considerable savings in Federal and State tax moneys. But if the original deliveries are still considered necessary, they can be provided by relocating the project downstream to Reelsville. This site would provide even better flood control, as much or more water supply, and all of the other benefits claimed for the original project, at a substantially equivalent benefit to cost ratio.

We know that there are feasible alternatives, and that these suggested are only representative of the possibilities. The Indiana Conservation Council feels there is more to the enjoyment of water resources than power boating and water skiing. Our members and thousands among the general public also desire free-flowing streams and quiet valleys away from the stink and noise of motorboats and automobiles and gaudy resorts. Big Walnut Valley can provide these values in a way few if any other places in our State can do.

We have heard it argued that if this corps project is modified there would be no way to assure preservation of the upper valley in its present condition. We reject such arguments completely. The greatest threat to the upper valley's qualities is from the Corps of Engineers itself, and not from the present private ownerships there. Many of these people have owned that land for generations, and have practiced a restraint which to this day has saved values not found elsewhere. The owners of the best of these lands are now prepared to apply for Natural Landmark registration, which carries the declared intent to continue a personal policy of keeping the natural qualities intact. Also many conservationists of the State, in special cooperation with the nature conservancy, are prepared to assist in the purchase of the best areas, and under rigid provision of the 1967 Indiana Nature Preserves Act, to seek permanent dedication of the existing natural qualities. Big Walnut Valley has been placed among the very top levels of Indiana's remaining outdoor estate by the new natural areas survey, being conducted by Dr. Alton A. Lindsey, of Purdue University, under provisions of a grant from the Ford Foundation. If the corps project is set aside or changed to prevent any flooding in the natural area, methods will be created at a rapid pace to permanently preserve the upper valley's qualities.