

The sum and substance of these statutory and constitutional provisions is that, in spite of the County's avowed willingness to cooperate to the limit of their legal and financial ability, it is impossible for these four small Counties in South Arkansas to expend \$1,270,000.00 for lands to be flooded by this project.

So, we have a project that is economically justified, either by raising the locks and flooding a large area or by dredging. Dollar-wise, there is no difference between the two methods although there may be a decided engineering advantage in raising the locks.

The project is approximately half completed but under the present authorization the Corps of Engineers cannot proceed with the two upper locks because the Arkansas Counties, although willing and legally cooperative, cannot financially provide the funds to acquire the lands required by this plan.

There are three possible solutions.

First, to abandon the upper half (the Arkansas part) of the project recognizing that because of the Counties' financial inability the river can never be restored to its original navigable condition, and the project under construction will have small value or use.

Second, to modify the authorization by permitting the Corps of Engineers to acquire the lands needed as a part of the construction cost of the project just as has been done in many other navigation projects.

Third, authorize the Corps of Engineers to modify its design and dredge the channel in the Felsenthal Reservoir.

The Ouachita River Valley Association respectfully requests this committee to modify the Ouachita Navigation Project as authorized by the Rivers and Harbors Act (approved 14 July 1960—Public Law 86-645) in order that the project may be completed.

We do not express a preference as to engineering approach for we believe that the people of the valley will accept either solution which the Corps of Engineers may recommend.

Perhaps, one other point should be discussed. To the Engineers Report (86th Congress) there was attached a report by the Fish and Wildlife Service indicating that to superimpose an additional four feet onto the raised lock and dam No. 6 would result in vast advantages to fish and wildlife conservation and the Corps of Engineers' present plan is to superimpose this wildlife pool upon the navigation pool.

This would involve an additional 23,000 acres of land which, although not permanently inundated, would be flooded several months in the year. The local interests will also be called upon to provide easements on this additional land. The owners of this land will not give these easements and the land will have to be purchased or condemned, which, of course, the Counties cannot do financially. We understand from local sponsors of this fish and wildlife pool that they will be able to provide from other Federal Funds the money with which to acquire this land and that in fact, the acquisition of the lands for the fish and wildlife pool will not present any problem.

Mr. THATCHER. I have another paper from our county judges. There are three county judges involved in this thing, mostly three. There is actually a fourth, but they have such a small amount it does not amount to very much, and they have presented their reasons for their inability to carry forward.

Mr. DORN. Without objection.

(The statement follows:)

STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES W. EARNEST, COUNTY JUDGE OF BRADLEY COUNTY, ARK.

My dear Mr. Chairman, I am James W. Earnest, County Judge of Bradley County, Arkansas. As a member of the Ouachita River Valley Association, I appeared with County Judge W. T. Higginbotham of Ashley County and County Judge Carlton Jerry of Union County before the Senate Public Works Committee on May 23, 1968, requesting a modification in the Congressional authorization of the Ouachita-Black River Navigation Project to allow the cost of the flooded lands in the Felsenthal Navigation Pool to become a part of the project cost.

This request is made because the three counties most heavily involved are unable to purchase the required acreages due to limited finances and State