

STATEMENT OF DR. JOHN GOTTSCHALK, DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF
SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR;
ACCOMPANIED BY WILLIAM WHITE, CHIEF, DIVISION OF
RIVER BASIN STUDIES, BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND
WILDLIFE

Dr. GOTTSCHALK. Thank you.

I have with me Mr. William White, who is the Chief of our Division of River Basin Studies, who handles our work that is related to permit applications of the Corps of Engineers. With your permission, I would like to have him join me at the witness table.

Mr. JONES. We will be pleased to have Mr. White join you.

Dr. GOTTSCHALK. Mr. Chairman, I have no prepared statement. I was an observer at the previous hearing and feel that the general situation has been thoroughly covered. I would only like to address my preliminary remarks to two points which I think would be of interest to the committee. Then later, of course, I would be glad to answer any questions I can with respect to our part in this whole matter of the Hunting Creek fill.

There has been some comment or reference made to what was called upgrading of our initial report on this project by the Washington office.

I would like to clarify this particular point by speaking very briefly of the procedure we follow in handling our reviews of Corps of Engineer permit applications.

These applications range from rather simple matters, perhaps involving the installation of a pier or a few pilings in a channel, to rather large-scale dredging projects. We simply do not have enough staff to make a field examination of every proposed project for which approval is sought by private interests from the Corps of Engineers.

Consequently, it is our practice at the field level to screen all of these permit applications. Those which appear on the surface to have little or no effect on fish and wildlife are eliminated from our schedule.

When this particular application was brought to the attention of our field personnel situated at our regional office in Atlanta, the Atlanta office looked over their whole program and decided that they would not be in a position, because of the other requirements being made of their staff, to make a study of this project.

When our Washington office learned of this decision at the regional office level, the region was directed to make a study of this project.

The reason that this was done was because at this time, back in 1963 and 1964, there was an awakening of interest in trying to do something to improve the character and condition of the Potomac River. We were not certain that our Atlanta staff was fully appreciative of this increased interest, and therefore we felt that we should make certain that they did understand what was happening, and that we did have an obligation to make a report, and should go ahead and make a study and report.

Consequently, as I stated, the regional office was directed to make this report.

Once the report was made, there was never any changing of the values or the conclusions reached by the regional office by our Washington office. That is to say, we up here did not attempt to edit or