ion that it would have an adverse effect on that interest? Is that correct?

Dr. GOTTSCHALK. This is true. This is what I have concluded. Our report comes to this conclusion. I would, however, have to recognize that the 9 acres that will be withdrawn from the total wildlife habitat estate of this country is so small that it would never be measurable in terms of its effect on fish and wildlife.

The point I tried to make with the Secretary was that we are losing our habitat, not in large chunks, but in these small bites.

I cannot really attest to the use of those 9 acres by ducks. I cannot say I ever saw a duck right there. But the loss of those 9 acres plus the thousands of other 9 acres is what is destroying our wildlife heritage in the United States. Beyond that, of course, I tried to make the point—and I think the committee staff has this available in the record—that it would set a precedent at a time when all of us are concerned about the Potomac that would be difficult to withstand in terms of further filling in this same general area.

So that the loss of the 9 acres in itself may be somewhat immaterial. I explained my position in some detail to Mr. Black. I know that he considered it thoroughly before he came to his final conclusion. As I say, I respect his decision, even though we do not agree.

Mr. VANDER JAGT. So, for all of these reasons it would, in fact, have an adverse effect, if we can zero in on that one interest; but you say you can understand his decision because he has to take into consideration larger interests. What are those interests?

Dr. GOTTSCHALK. I would not be able to speak specifically to this, but I think that the Secretary is frequently in a position where he must make choices. Generally what he is confronted with is the choice of protecting a piece of habitat on the one hand, or standing in the way of some kind of development on the other hand.

We all recognize that our country is growing rapidly, and this growth means that there will have to be developments of one kind or another.

The Secretary's problem, as I see it, at least partly—and I would not want to suggest that I understand it thoroughly—is how to do the best job of preserving our natural heritage and still accommodate the growth expansion needs of our country.

Mr. VANDER JAGT. So you just realize that there are other interests that he has to take into consideration, but you do not propose to know for sure what those other interests are?

Dr. GOTTSCHALK. That is correct.

Mr. VANDER JAGT. You would not know, for example, if there were other places that these high-rise apartments could be built? It was not your job to explore those possibilities.

Dr. GOTTSCHALK. It was not. I can say as a generality that I think there are much better places to build high-rise apartments than in our rivers, estuaries, lakes, and ocean fronts.

Mr. VANDER JAGT. Thank you very much for clearing that up.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Reuss.

Mr. REUSS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Director Gottschalk, on the point that Congressman Vander Jagt was just exploring, you said that from the wildlife standpoint and from the interests of the Fish