

These islands are administered now—and would continue to be administered under bill S. 3502—by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife as the Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge and the Gravel Island National Wildlife Refuge. For more than 50 years the Federal Government has protected these pristine islands, which are havens for thousands of nesting birds and today we ask you to give them even greater security, as designated wilderness areas.

Last year the Bureau conducted a public hearing on this proposal in the City of Sturgeon Bay in Door County. At that hearing the proposal was strongly supported by all those testifying. Nearly 200 letters were received, and all of these also endorsed the Wisconsin Islands Wilderness proposal. The Wisconsin Conservation Department expressed a favorable view, as did a local County Supervisor. In short, support for this action is unanimous.

These three small islands which total only 29 acres in size are seldom visited except by dedicated bird enthusiasts. No mineral values are known. The islands are entirely in Federal ownership, and no acquisition of land or other cost will result from this designation.

Mr. Chairman, the designation of these islands as wilderness would certainly be in the public interest, as the citizens of Wisconsin have shown. Such legislation would secure additional, statutory protection for these small islands, which are valuable only because they have been kept wild and remain so today.

I am hopeful that your Committee will move quickly to report such legislation and that it will gain Senate passage soon, so as to demonstrate to my colleagues in the House Committee its noncontroversial nature and absence of any problems in connection with consideration of my bill, H.R. 16943.

STATEMENT OF HON. WILLIAM D. HATHAWAY, A U.S. REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS
FROM THE STATE OF MAINE

Mr. Chairman and Members of this Committee, the well-being of this country depends upon policy which accommodates both a concern for our economic well-being and a concern that man, himself a part of nature, cannot tolerate careless exploitation of natural resources. Our water is not only a source of "power" but a source of human sustenance. It is both—and it can serve as both only if policy recognizes the need for accommodating both uses. Our land is not only a foundation for concrete but a birthplace for all that grows naturally from the earth and our air is not only our source of life but a property which, when abused, may be a source of death. What is important, then, is that we respect our exhaustible resources and that we treat them as such when we use them. To maintain all our natural resources as wilderness would be just as deadly to the human race as would a policy which carelessly treats these resources as slaves to economic profits. The necessity is for a balance between these interests.

In recognition of the need for this balance and in view of the rapid expansive needs of a booming population, the Federal government seeks, through the Department of Interior, to preserve certain land as "wilderness" where man's natural habitat will be permanently maintained. Likewise, in recognition of the unequal distribution of economic growth, other agencies of the Federal government seek to stimulate a comprehensive development of resources out of respect for other very legitimate human needs.

With these thoughts in mind and without contradicting my active pursuit for desperately needed economic growth and resource development in the State of Maine, I introduced legislation in the House to designate the Edmunds and Birch Islands Units within Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge in Maine—as wilderness areas. The Edmunds and Birch Islands Wilderness proposals contain a total of about 2,780 acres of land within the refuge which is situated within Washington County, Maine. This land designation came as a result of a public hearing in Calais, Maine, April 12, 1967, at which time the Department of Interior presented its tentative proposal and heard public and private testimony in regard to it.

The initial proposal for Birch Islands received no objections and objections registered to the Edmunds Wilderness proposal resulted in a reduction of the land area proposed to be maintained as wilderness. This clearly indicates the willingness of the Department of Interior to act on legitimate objections to certain "wilderness" designations. In this case, the State Highway Commission objection that the area might interfere with the possible expansion of Route 1 was withdrawn when new boundaries were incorporated into the proposal.