

Senator CHURCH. Our next witness will be Mr. Jack Moody, secretary-director of the Somerset County Park Commission.

**STATEMENT OF JACK W. MOODY, SECRETARY-DIRECTOR,
SOMERSET COUNTY PARK COMMISSION**

Mr. MOODY. Mr. Chairman, I am Jack W. Moody, secretary-director of the Somerset County Park Commission, Somerset County, N.J., serving a resident population of 195,000 people. It is an exceedingly great pleasure for me to appear before you today to express the feelings of the park commission and my own personal convictions on the wilderness proposal before you.

Only in its 11th year, the Somerset County Park Commission, an agency created by public referendum, proudly owns and maintains eight parks consisting of 2,100 acres. Our immediate goal is 3,000 acres by 1970. Now, for those of you who come from the great States of the Far West, this may not seem to be an impressive figure, and perhaps this is true. But for those of us living in the rapidly urbanizing regions of New Jersey, 2,000, 3,000 or 5,000 acres represent that much and even more. Every single acre set aside for open space, effectively protected by law, means preservation of a small piece of our important natural heritage.

Much has and will be said regarding the vast citizen and community action involved in preserving Great Swamp. It also seems important to list here the enormous governmental effort and money already invested in the preservation of the Great Swamp Basin:

1. The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, \$2,800,000.
2. Passaic River Park, Somerset County, \$795,000.
3. Loantaka Brook Reservation, Morris County, \$650,000.

These funds are in addition to the \$1.5 million raised by the North Jersey Conservation Foundation for the establishment of the refuge and \$75,000 contributed by that organization toward the creation of the Somerset County Passaic River Park. This makes a grant total of \$5,820,000 just for land acquisition, without including any county park development costs. Of this figure thus far, the State of New Jersey has made an investment of \$469,000 and the Federal Government \$395,000.

The most recent land acquisition project of the park commission is in that portion of the Great Swamp Basin as it extends across the Passaic River into Somerset County, identified on the map as the Passaic River Park. In recognizing the regional importance of preserving Great Swamp as a whole, and our portion in particular, the commission's proposal received the immediate and complete support of municipal and county planning and governmental officials.

Subsequently, the acquisition was endorsed by the Tri-State Transportation Commission, which is the metropolitan regional planning agency, and has received grant-in-aid funds through the New Jersey State green acres local assistance program, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development open space program, and private philanthropy. I mention these facts only to show the broad-based acceptance of the Great Swamp's preservation.

The Passaic River Park of Somerset County and the Loantaka Brook Reservation in Morris County form a contiguous open space