

wilderness status. Under the provisions of the 1964 Act, the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife in the Department of Interior was required to review every roadless area of 5,000 acres or more, and every roadless island within the National Wildlife Refuge System to determine the suitability of each area as wilderness. The Bureau—the major federal agency in the field of conservation of animals, birds, reptiles and fish—found Monomoy Island, a Massachusetts island located off the Cape Cod Coast, eminently qualified for wilderness designation. Monomoy Island was, in fact, the first wilderness area proposed by the Bureau for inclusion. The U.S. Geological Survey and U.S. Bureau of Mines have examined the proposed Monomoy Wilderness as well. They have cleared the island for wilderness status in finding that the area has no known mineral resources other than the sands from which the island is made.

It is perhaps difficult to imagine a landed area which more patently coincides than Monomoy with Congressional design to set aside federally owned lands that had not yet been commercially exploited and that were still in a naturally wild state. This 2,600 acre barrier beach island extending about nine miles south from the elbow of Cape Cod protrudes into the ocean as a boundary between Nantucket Sound and the open sea. A roadless, uninhabited area, Monomoy is a sparsely vegetated island where dunes and sand flats, marshes and meadows serve as an ideal refuge for wildlife. Many renowned ornithologists have acclaimed this refuge as having no equal as a shore-bird area.

Monomoy has been managed as a national wildlife refuge since 1944. It is used by fishermen, sportsmen, naturalists, artists and other outdoor enthusiasts and aesthetes. Its rugged and ever-changing sand strip island exists as a human retreat and nature area for the major population centers of the Northeast. Located within a day's drive for one-third of the country's people—less than one hundred miles from either Boston or Providence—Monomoy would constitute the only wilderness preservation within the major populated seacoast area.

In proposing this island sanctuary for inclusion in the Wilderness Preservation System, the Department of Interior and the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife have proceeded with due caution, insuring that a change of the island's status would not infringe upon the rights of those who presently enjoy its resources. The Department complied with the requirements of the 1964 Act by giving sufficient notice and hearing to all parties interested in the island. The Monomoy hearings were held over a two day period providing maximum opportunity for building a public record. In reviewing this public document, it is readily apparent that elected officials, interested parties and private citizens supported wilderness designation.

Besides the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, wilderness classification was recommended or supported by the U.S. Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, the Massachusetts Department of Natural Resources, Governor John Volpe, elected officials of governments effected by the island—namely, Barnstable County and Chatham, and the Cape Cod Planning and Economic Commission. Since mail serves as a barometer of public support, correspondence received by the Interior Department on Monomoy indicated ninety percent favoring wilderness classification. The primary opposition to wilderness classification by surf fishing interests stemmed from restrictions which would be imposed on the use of mechanical vehicles.

In sum, Monomoy Island lies in the heart of one of the most popular vacation spots in the entire Northeast. Wilderness area status for this virgin island will aid in preserving forever by Act of Congress its unspoiled character. It would prevent future generations from encroaching upon and despoiling one of the few natural island areas remaining in our country. Moreover, no more fitting complement could be found to the Cape Cod National Seashore—a project supported by me and the late President, John F. Kennedy, when he occupied this Senate seat—than the inclusion of this unblemished island in the Wilderness Preservation System.

Mr. Chairman, I urge the speedy passage of S. 3425, a bill to designate the lands on Monomoy Wildlife Refuge as wilderness. It stands in the best interest of all concerned—the citizens of Chatham and Barnstable County, Massachusetts, outdoor enthusiasts and nature lovers of the Northeastern United States, and future generations.