

into question certain aspects of wilderness designation for the proposed Great Swamp Wilderness Areas.

The Foundation, as you may know from the record, was largely instrumental in the creation of the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge within which the proposed wilderness areas are contained. Our position, we believe, reflects accurately the total consensus of civic, industrial and governmental entities at all levels—municipal, county and state—all of which have recorded their support for wilderness designation of these areas.

The testimony at issue was given by the Department of the Interior. Its purpose, we believe, was to seek guidance from the Committee for new and uncharted responsibilities under the Wilderness Act; namely, the administration of small wilderness units within existing Federal wildlife refuges which are accessible to large population centers.

We understand the concern of the Department. Areas such as Great Swamp break new ground in the application of the Wilderness Act. But the effect of the testimony, as we perceived it, was to conjure up the prospect of development—latrines, multiple access trails and other man-made accommodations—which could be considered contradictions of the concept and purposes of the Wilderness Act.

The Foundation believes strongly that this prospect is unfounded, for reasons we would like to submit as supplements to our own direct testimony before the Committee.

We believe, first, that despite its location Great Swamp is in no danger of being over-run by hordes of visitors whose safety and accommodation would require incompatible development.

It is true that the proposed wilderness lies within the most densely populated metropolitan area in the nation. This, in fact, is one of the strongest arguments for its preservation as wilderness. Very simply, however, Great Swamp has defended itself from encroachment by man since primeval times. And this, essentially, is why so much of the proposed wilderness area remains primeval today.

Bog, marsh and heavy undergrowth are natural barriers to easy penetration. The areas are too small to encourage, and the terrain in general will not permit, overnight camping by visitors.

If these natural barriers are given permanence through wilderness designation, appropriate access to the areas need not violate any tenet of the wilderness system.

We believe, secondly, that such visitor accommodations as may ultimately prove necessary may be located either within the refuge area or in the adjoining park areas of Morris and Somerset Counties.

In this way, and in other ways as well, both county park systems are capable of serving as buffers to the wilderness areas, as their respective directors testified before the Committee.

We believe, further, that plans of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife for the management of the remaining refuge area will not encroach in any consequential way upon the character of the proposed wilderness areas.

In short, we believe the proposed Great Swamp Wilderness Areas not only qualify without reservation for wilderness designation, but can and should be administered forever in strict accordance with the provisions of the National Wilderness Act.

Sincerely,

ESTY STOWELL, *Trustee.*

SUMMIT, N.J., *July 2, 1968.*

HON. HENRY JACKSON,
Chairman, Senate Interior Committee, Senate Office Building,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR SENATOR JACKSON: I urge passage of S. 3379 which would establish a number of Wilderness areas including The Great Swamp, Morris County, New Jersey. The proximity of this area to an already badly overcrowded area makes it even more important that it be set aside and kept free from the works of man.

The tensions of the city are surely exacerbated by the density of their population. Whatever can be kept free will be a refuge not only for birds and animals but for the spirit of man as well.

Very truly yours,

WALTER G. WELLS.