

Sierra Club Bulletin

MARCH 1969

President's Message

Recent conservation legislation—including the establishment of a Redwood National Park, a North Cascades Park, a Trails System and a Wild Rivers System—was opposed by the timber industry at every step of the way, persistently, expertly and expectedly. Traditionally a foe of what it likes to call “locking up” any resources in protected areas, be they in parks or wilderness, the industry seemed to believe that its tried and true arguments would carry the same weight in 1969 that they carried in 1959. It came as a severe shock when the arguments didn't work.

It was at least a threefold shock. There was the legislation itself—particularly the Redwood Park legislation—with all its implications that the public considered timber to be worth more as a scenic resource than as an economic commodity. There was the sad fact that the industry's public image was not what it once was. And there was the stunning shift in public opinion—the crowds of people who spoke up for wilderness, for natural beauty, for recreational value, for protecting the land and the landscape. Such a groundswell of public concern could hardly be ignored, especially when much of it was directed to the timber industry itself in a bombardment of letters.

One might expect that an industry which has proved itself both enlightened and flexible in adapting modern technological improvements to its needs would examine this new public concern objectively, realizing that it reflects a growing understanding by many people of the importance of wilderness values and the total environmental crisis.

And certain members of the industry have begun to talk more and more about recreational development, about ecology, about the total environment. It appears, however, that some of this talk is lip service. Apparently, feeling deeply threatened, the timber industry is simultaneously launching a massive counteroffensive against these very ideas.

Their prime target is the wilderness idea. They believe they can afford to lose no more forests, no matter how marginal. One may expect new and subtle propaganda against new wilderness areas. There may be new alliances between different “multiple use” industries, groups and people. The work is still in the behind-scene stage, but it is well under way.

The second target of industry is to improve its public image. Expect to see more costly build-up of good timber practices, of good management, of multiple use. There will doubtless be more talk about the environment and scenic values, etc., in connection with this.

And finally, most deadly of all, expect a growing pressure on the Forest Service by the timber industry to open up for “harvest” every last area that is not already dedicated as wilderness, and at an accelerating rate.

This new industry assault on publicly-owned forest and on wilderness may be understandable—it is being launched by men whose primary interest is making money out of wood products; and easily accessible, inexpensive big timber in private hands is too close to the end point. We believe, however, that it is ill-advised, shortsighted, and will inevitably backfire.

This is almost 1970. People everywhere are increasingly aware of the importance of undistributed natural places, not only for their esthetic value but for their vital contribution to the overall environment. Pressures on public lands for special uses will not go unheeded—nor unheard. As we have pointed out before, we all share the same environment. It behooves the timber industry to recognize their future stake in that environment, as well as ours.

EDGAR WAYBURN



Sierra Club Bulletin

MARCH, 1969
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... TO EXPLORE, ENJOY, AND PROTECT
THE NATION'S SCENIC RESOURCES ...

FRONT COVER: At Santa Barbara, the derrick and the dead. Photographs by Dick Smith and Susan Landor.

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THE SIERRA CLUB,* founded in 1892, has devoted itself to the study and protection of national scenic resources, particularly those of mountain regions. Participation is invited in the program to enjoy and preserve wilderness, wildlife, forests, and streams.

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Housing Committee to study lumber supply, prices

Senator John Sparkman, chairman of the Senate Banking and Currency Committee, announced his Housing Subcommittee will hold hearings March 19-21 to study lumber prices and "the timber and wood product shortage." These hearings are an outgrowth of the efforts of the National Association of Home Builders and the forest products industry to increase the allowable cut on public lands and to curb creation of new park, recreation, and wilderness areas. According to Senator Sparkman, "The purpose of the hearings is to look into all facets of the problem to try to find some way to increase the supply of lumber and wood products in order to cut back spiraling prices." (See the President's Message, page 2, on the new lumber industry assault on publicly-owned forests and wilderness areas.)

Bureau of Budget backs grazing fee increase for 1969

The Bureau of the Budget announced in mid-January that grazing fees would be increased beginning this year on lands administered by the Departments of Agriculture and Interior. Hearings on the increased grazing fee schedules were held February 27 and 28 by the Senate Public Lands Subcommittee. According to the Bureau of the Budget, "Stockmen using lands administered by Interior's Bureau of Land Management in 1969 will pay 44 cents to graze one cow or five sheep for a month, compared with 33 cents in 1968. New fees on Western National Forest Lands managed by Agriculture's Forest Service will range from 31 cents to \$1.25 per cow-month, with sheep grazing at 6 cents to 25 cents monthly. In 1968 these National Forest fees ranged from 21 cents to \$1.80 per cow-month." Conservationists have supported higher fees on the grounds that former fees were far below fair market value of forage and tended to encourage poor range management.

Hearings to create Senate forum on technology impact

For three days, March 4, 5, and 6, Senator Edmund Muskie's Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations of the Government Operations Committee held hearings on S.J. Resolution 78, To Establish a Select Senate Committee on Technology and the Human Environment. The Select Committee would create a central forum in the Senate to investigate the future impact of science and technology—its benefits and its hazards—on people and their environment. "We want to learn where we are heading as we move from a natural environment to one dominated by technology, where our greatest challenge lies in the hazards man has created for himself in products, processes, and patterns of life," Senator Muskie said.

New subcommittee on conservation set up in House

The House Government Operations Committee recently established a Subcommittee on Conservation and Natural Resources, the first subcommittee in either House of Congress with overall natural resources jurisdiction. The new subcommittee on conservation will

oversee such agencies as the Interior Department (parks, water pollution, fish and wildlife), the Department of Agriculture (forests), Army Corps of Engineers (water resources development), Federal Power Commission, and the Water Resources Council. The subcommittee's chairman, Rep. Henry S. Reuss, D-Wisc., was directed to examine the effectiveness of these agencies "in conserving, developing, managing, and utilizing natural resources and in maintaining and improving the quality of the nation's environmental and ecological heritage." Members of the subcommittee are Rep. Jim Wright, D-Tex., Rep. Floyd Hicks, D-Wash., Rep. John Moss, D-Calif., Rep. Gilbert Gude, R-Md., Rep. Guy Vander Jagt, R-Mich., and Rep. Paul McCloskey, Jr., R-Calif.

Pt. Reyes Seashore inholding to be developed

Seven years after its creation, the Pt. Reyes National Seashore boundaries still do not include some 29,000 acres of private lands valued at \$37 million. Legislation before Congress now would raise the total Pt. Reyes National Seashore authorization to \$57 million. However, 2,500 acres of what Park Superintendent Edward Durtz calls "one of the best sections of the seashore" may be sold for private development soon. Owners of the 2,500 acre Lake Ranch recently announced plans to subdivide it into 40-acre lots. Park Service officials say loss of the ranch would virtually detach the entire southern segment of the park from the rest of the proposed seashore. The ranch owners, who owe money on the property they now claim is worth \$6 million, feel that the government's lack of interest in acquiring the land frees them from their obligation to hold on to it any longer. No Pt. Reyes monies were recommended in the 1968-1969 Bureau of Outdoor Recreation Budget.

Nominations and appointments to Interior posts

Russell Train, former president of the Conservation Foundation, heads the list of new personnel as the Nixon Administration organizes its Department of Interior. Train was sworn in as Under Secretary of the Interior on February 7. Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel told newsmen that he expected Train "to be my right hand man." An active conservationist, Train's former positions also include executive board member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources; trustee and vice president of the World Wildlife Fund; honorary trustee of the Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda National Parks, and trustee of the American Conservation Association. Following the 1968 presidential election, Train was asked by then President-elect Nixon to serve as chairman of a special task force to advise the incoming administration on environmental problems. Other nominations and appointments to fill Interior vacancies include Dr. Leslie L. Glasgow, Professor of Wildlife Management at Louisiana State University, as Assistant Secretary for parks, fish and wildlife, and marine resources; Hollis M. Dole, Director of the Oregon State Department of Minerals, as Assistant Sec-

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February Board of Directors Meeting

POLICY ON OFFSHORE OIL DRILLING regulations and approval of the President's temporary suspension of the Executive Director's financial authority were among the actions taken at the February 8 and 9 meeting of the Sierra Club Board of Directors in San Francisco. Fourteen directors were present with Director Leopold unavoidably absent. The full Board will not convene again until its reorganizational meeting following the April election.

INTERNAL MATTERS

• **President's action upheld.** On January 14, 1969, a Sierra Club ad appeared in *The New York Times* headed "New Sierra Club publications advance this urgent idea: An international program, before it is too late, to preserve Earth as a 'conservation district' within the Universe; a sort of 'Earth National Park.'" The direct costs for preparing and publishing the ad, placed by Executive Director David Brower without the knowledge of the club's President, Treasurer, Controller, and a majority of the Board, totaled \$14,698. Prorating the annual retainer paid to Freeman, Mander and Gossage, the advertising agency that prepared the ad, brings the cost of the ad to \$19,698. On January 28, President Edgar Wayburn wrote to Executive Director Brower: "In accordance with the legal advice I have received, I am by means of this memorandum immediately suspending any and all authority in you to make or fulfill financial commitments of any kind on behalf of the Sierra Club or with club funds until the end of the Board of Directors meeting February 8-9, 1969."

At its December 1968 meeting the Board had discussed a proposed international book series and had approved the seeking of funds and authors but with the stipulation that no binding commitments should be made until various club committees could study the proposal and report back to the Board.

In his report to the Board at the February meeting, President Wayburn said: "In my opinion it [the ad] clearly disregarded policy passed by this Board at its December meeting, and it was further an unauthorized and sizable expenditure of club funds. As the president of a non-profit organization working in the public interest, I felt it was my responsibility to take certain action on what I considered a grossly irresponsible act. . . . Subsequently, when our Executive Director failed to give what I considered adequate explanation for the placement of the ad, I felt it necessary to suspend his authority to make or fulfill financial commitments of any kind with club funds, pending full Board consideration. I did this also partly in light of other recent actions by the Executive Director. I shall mention three which I consider to be grossly irresponsible.

"The first occurred on May 28, 1968, the day our attorney presented our final plea to the IRS in Washington to regain our tax-exempt status. This was the climax of a legal battle authorized by the Board, which had cost the club thousands of dollars and which had dragged on for many months. . . .

Our Executive Director chose that moment to send a night letter to Henry Fowler, then Secretary of the Treasury, (with copies to many and sundry individuals and organizations) which in effect negated the power of our counsel to represent the club. I was obliged to send a telegram the next day, May 29th, repudiating this action. . . .

"The second action concerned the expenditure of funds given to the club in England. Without the knowledge of the Board, the President, or the Controller, and just before a bank account had been established to receive these funds, the Executive Director had authorized payment of about half the money to a variety of ventures. . . .

"The third action which so deeply concerned me was the issuance of *The Explorer* in November. In connection with mailing this publication, representations were made to the U.S. Post Office that this publication was paid for specifically out of club dues and was a regular quarterly and the masthead so stated. Neither statement was true and had to be repudiated.

To me, therefore, the placement of the ad in *The New York Times* was the culmination of several recent grossly irresponsible actions. . . ."

Prior to publication of this Bulletin Executive Director Brower stated, "Do I have authority to do what I am authorized by this Board to do without requiring consultation? I believed I was. I believe that I am. What I cannot see continue to happen is constant review, review, and re-review, which has taken interminable amounts of time and cost the club a great deal of money. It's very hard to see an idea run this gamut—go to the Executive Committee, go to the President, be discussed by the Board, then be rediscussed by the Publications Committee—when you're trying to get the work done. There are too many things to be done for all of us to try to do them. We have to delegate, and this is one of the reasons I'm putting my job up for grabs, or losing it—resigning whether or not I'm elected. The President cannot be the editor of the ads, and of the Bulletin, any more than he can of the chapter newsletters. There have to be delegations. I have to have, or whoever replaces me has to have, the authority to act without having his daily deeds checked. There has to be a separation of powers so that the Board does consider policy and does not try to run the club day by day."

After discussion the Board passed the following resolution 7 to 6 (with the President abstaining and Director Leopold absent): "The Board of Directors of the Sierra Club approves and confirms the action of the President on January 28, 1969, in suspending the financial authority of the Executive Director until the end of the Board of Directors' meeting, February 8-9, 1969."

• **Restricted fund set up.** To accept contributions resulting from the ad so that neither a legal nor moral obligation to proceed with the series would be incurred, the Board resolved,

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BIG WALNUT VALLEY

by David A. Remley



THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS has to keep itself busy. While it is certainly true that the Corps has good intentions and many notable accomplishments to its credit, it is also true that as a giant bureau employing thousands of people, one of the Corps' main concerns is to survive as an institution. Survival requires a constant search for projects that justify the Corps' existence — projects which, if they are not actually worthwhile in the broadest public sense, can be made to seem so.

One such project is a proposed dam and reservoir in the valley of Big Walnut Creek. What, exactly, is at stake? Big Walnut Valley is one of the finest unspoiled areas left in Indiana. Carved out by glacial meltwater thousands of years ago, the deep gorges of the creek provide a wet, cool climate where northern plant species can flourish. Canadian yew

and hemlock grow here in large numbers; Indiana's three largest hemlocks prosper on the ridges. Mixed with these northern species are healthy examples of the climax cover of central Indiana and a variety of species native to the Appalachian highlands. Indiana's three largest sassafras trees and her largest red maple grow here. Fine groves of tulip poplar and beech-maple cover hilltops above the valley. So favorable is the climate that in one area of less than 20 acres, more than 320 plant species and 120 bird species have been identified. Of special interest is one of the largest of the rapidly decreasing great blue heron rookeries in the state. From clear stream to hilltops, a series of terraces tells the story of the valley's growth through the ages. A recent study by the Department of the Interior called Big Walnut Valley eligible to be a National Natural Landmark.

Along Big Walnut Creek, ecologists from Wabash College, Purdue, and Indiana State University have been sending their students for research. Professors Petty of Wabash and Lindsay of Purdue are making important studies of the ecology of the streambed and hills, and much is yet to be done. What they need to learn, is the effect on plant and animal life when Indiana farms upstream are heavily fertilized with nitrates. What is the effect of the herbicides and insecticides used in Central Indiana's towns and cornfields? Might it not be desirable to preserve such areas for birds, who can help farmers by eating the insects that harm their crops (thus lessening the need for insecticides, with their destructive side effects)? Such questions can best be answered by continued research in living natural history museums like Big Walnut. And such areas remain really useful for research only so long as they are set aside in their natural state.

The Indiana Academy of Science, the Audubon Society, the Indiana Conservation Council affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation, the Save the Indiana Dunes Council, the Izaak Walton League, and more recently, the Sierra Club, have cooperated in efforts to prevent construction of Big Walnut dam and reservoir as presently planned.

From the first hearing at Greencastle in October 1965, conservationists have requested modification of the Corps' proposal. The best of the vulnerable natural area is on the upper reaches of the proposed reservoir, and the Corps testified that only during flood stage would any of the area be inundated. Conservationists asked that the reservoir pool at high

water be kept entirely out of the area in question. The Corps would not agree. But in recognition of the area's value, it proposed to construct a "nature center" with a museum, a good access road, a parking lot, and observation towers from which visitors could watch herons in the rookery. The absurdity of this proposal, made in all earnestness, clearly suggests that the Corps didn't understand the ecosystem it proposed to tamper with. Its entire approach to the valley has shown the same lack of understanding.

In late 1965, officials of the Izaak Walton League were shocked to learn that the Corps had not made sedimentation tests in the valley, and that it had not known of the presence of the priceless natural area. The Corps' whole plan had been drawn up from aerial photographs and from studies of areas alleged to be similar. This, the League was told, was standard practice. Later, on-site tests by Professor Helmut Kohnke of Purdue's agronomy department were to reveal that the sedimentation rate in the valley would be high — much higher than the Corps seems to have assumed.

BENEFIT-COST AGAIN

The Corps justifies the Big Walnut project on the basis of a benefit-cost ratio. Flood control *plus* recreational value *plus* water storage *plus* water quality control are calculated to be worth more than the project would cost in tax dollars. An obvious defect of benefit-cost analysis — in this particular case, and in multitudes of others like it — is that "intangibles" such as natural beauty are left out of the equation. And it is assumed that a value added is superior to the value it replaces. "Recreation" means a reservoir easily accessible to all with speed boats, trolling rods, picnic grounds, marinas. . . . However much that kind of homogenization benefits the land developer, it will not do for thousands of outdoorsmen. It is important that those thousands upon thousands of individuals with a taste for hiking in still woods, for fishing the riffles of a free-running stream, for wading the clear edges of an unpolluted river, be guaranteed some opportunity to enjoy their kind of refreshment too.

Recreation accounts for 30 percent of Big Walnut's benefits as calculated by the Corps. Conservationists hold that the state does not need another big reservoir within 50 miles of Indianapolis; there are already *eight* others within a 50-mile radius, most of them with "recreational values" included in their benefit-cost computations. Mansfield Reservoir, built by the Corps, is only 17 miles from the Big Walnut site. One must wonder whose "recreation values" will be increased, and by how much.

Another benefit claimed for Big Walnut is water storage potential for Indianapolis. Water for the use of the Indianapolis Water Company, a privately-owned utility, would need to be piped 35 miles. The Corps' study did not take account of the 21 billion gallon potential of the water company's Mud Creek Reservoir, now under construction just upstream from the waterworks, from which delivery will be by gravity flow. Nor did it take account of the potential in an apparently



PHOTOGRAPHS BY GENE RAMSBEY

feasible expansion of the water company's Geist Reservoir to an additional 28 billion gallons. Even without Big Walnut, we have in the area a potential total of 49 billion gallons of additional storage capacity, none of it mentioned in the Corps' benefit-cost calculations, and all of it available *at no federal expense* in far greater quantity than the relatively small gallonage to be piped 35 miles from the Big Walnut at huge federal expense!

The optimum operating conditions of a storage or recreational reservoir (normally full) are the opposite of optimum operating conditions for a flood-control reservoir (normally empty, to provide maximum catchment of flood waters). Nonetheless, flood control is a benefit claimed for projects like the Big Walnut dam. Under pressure from Indiana conservation groups and the Indiana Academy of Science, the Corps has made further studies and reports 20 possible alternatives. Four of these, according to the Corps' own conclusions, are economically feasible and comparable in benefit-cost ratio to the Big Walnut project. One feasible alternative is a Soil Conservation Service plan to build many small impoundments in the headwaters of drainage basins instead of one big reservoir downstream; this would preserve the nearly 5,000 acres that the Corps' reservoir would inundate, and give excellent flood protection. Another feasible alternative, which would also give better flood protection than Big Wal-

nut according to the Corps' study, is a damsite further downstream, near Reelsville.

If a dam were built near Reelsville, however, its reservoir would be polluted by sewage from the city of Greencastle (unless the sewage were conveyed by a miles-long pipeline to the foot of the dam). A dam at Big Walnut, upstream from Greencastle, would provide plenty of water to flush the city's sewage on down into the Wabash River. This dubious expedient is called "water quality control" and is counted among Big Walnut's benefits.

"Water quality control" and "low flow augmentation" are two promotional euphemisms for the practice of releasing water in dry months to dilute (and redistribute) pollution downstream. The prevailing attitude seems to be that if the federal government will build reservoirs with plenty of wash water, our town won't need to tax its citizens for a sewage treatment plan or "discourage" industry by forcing it to treat its wastes.

Big Walnut dam and its alleged benefits would have a relatively brief life span. Purdue's Professor Kohnke has testified that the reservoir would be silted up within 100 years. Why, then, shouldn't some of Big Walnut's estimated \$37 million construction cost be spent instead to help build modern sewage disposal plants for Indiana cities and towns? Why not spend a fraction of the cost on the far more reasonable Soil Conservation Service plan? For three reasons, among others. First, the SCS ponds would not lend themselves to mass recreation and the spectacular opportunities for business profit that a big reservoir would provide. Second, Congressmen John Myers and Roger Zion, like other politicians, believe a large dam and reservoir would do more for their public image than small impoundments and sewage treatment plants. And third, the Corps of Engineers would be deprived of a project.

THE NEXT MOVE

The battle over Big Walnut is temporarily deadlocked. At the close of the last Congressional session, the Senate (which had finally opposed the project) and the House (which had approved it) compromised on a unique measure providing "that Big Walnut Dam and Reservoir shall not be initiated until approved by the President." Former Interior Secretary Stewart Udall opposed the project after his department studied the area, and President Johnson withheld approval. The new administration's Interior Secretary, Walter Hickel, will certainly come under heavy pressure from Congressmen Myers and Zion, the Wabash Valley Association, and the development-oriented Indiana Department of Natural Resources to recommend the project to President Nixon. Will there be enough countervailing pressure from the conservation-minded public? Can the deadlocked battle be won?

There is hope for the survival of Big Walnut and scores of other threatened natural areas like it, but only when citizens are alert and committed to action. If they are, they can let President Nixon clearly know that they want Big Walnut Creek to survive.

Powell Centennial Observances Open to Member Participation

THE SIERRA CLUB'S Powell Centennial Committee, headed by R. W. "Prof" Davis, River Touring Committee Chairman, has worked hard to earn the club its leading role in 1969 ceremonies commemorating the exploration of the Colorado River by Major John Wesley Powell. On May 24, near Green River, Wyoming, centennial events will include dedication of Powell's starting point as a national historic site and a symbolic launching of Martin Litton's Grand Canyon dories, which are well known because of their appearance in club books, the Bulletin, and the popular film, *Grand Canyon*.

The four-boat "Sierra Club fleet" (including Clyde Childress's *Mable T*) will float the Green, Yampa, and Colorado rivers for another 2½ months, tying in with other observances along Powell's route. There will be room for a few club members to join segments of the trip as paying passengers, with proceeds going to the club treasury. (Up to now, the entire expense of Sierra Club participation in the centennial has been borne by Prof Davis personally.)

The Centennial Committee's river trip will be a slow, thorough exploration, with no motors. These 15-foot wooden boats customarily run all rapids encountered, and are expected to do so this year. Groups will be small, with no more than ten passengers. Fees will be much lower than those charged by commercial operators for comparable trips (if you can find comparable trips). Here is the schedule: May 27—Grand Canyon, 20 days, \$480; June 21—Dinosaur National Monument, Lily Park to Headquarters, 6 days, \$160; June 28—Gray and Desolation canyons, Ouray to Green River, Utah, 7 days, \$190; July 5—Labyrinth, Stillwater, and Cataract canyons, Green River to Hite, 9 days, \$260; July 20—Grand Canyon, 20 days, \$480.

For details, contact Martin Litton, 180 Bear Gulch Drive, Portola Valley, California 94025.

Sierra Club Directors Larry Moss and Martin Litton (at oars) run a rapid in Grand Canyon. Photograph by Joe Munroe.



Santa Barbara's

by Frederick Eissler

February 16, 1969 — Officially, the upwelling of crude oil from Union Oil Company's Platform A in the fault-fractured Santa Barbara Channel is stopped. But a fresh slick six miles long and 100 feet wide is bleeding from the drilling site, and federal water pollution officials overseeing the disaster aren't leaving town yet.

Disaster struck on the anniversary of the issuance of federal oil leases in the channel — and the Interior Department's year-old promise that "measures to prevent oil pollution and protect esthetic values will be effective." Trouble began when Union Oil drillers on Platform A, six miles offshore, tapped an oil reservoir and gas dome at 3,500 feet. Gas and oil surged up with volcanic fury, and although the well was plugged, pressure forced oil out of fractures along Lands End fault (which Platform A straddles). Fed by an estimated 5,000 to 20,000 barrels a day, a slick covering 1,200 square miles or more cut the undersea environment off from life-giving sunlight.

Four days later, oil hit Santa Barbara's sandy beaches. Cormorants preening their feathers ingested oil and died. A colony of western grebes was soaked in sludge. Townspeople gathered victims and volunteered at cleaning stations to bathe them in mild detergent. Of 1,400 birds brought in, nearly half of the larger ones have been saved — but the incidence of blindness from the cleaner is reportedly high. Smaller shore birds such as sanderlings, plovers, curlews and sandpipers more often succumbed.

Anacapa Island, a unit of the projected Channel Islands National Park, was soon surrounded by sludge. Seals on its shores kept out of the oil as long as they could. But the sea is their home, where their food is, and they returned to it.

In the Torrey Canyon disaster, chemicals used to disperse the oil did more ecological damage than the oil itself. But despite challenges by conservationists, Union Oil turned to chemicals in frantic efforts to keep oil off the beaches. More than 150 chemical salesmen converged on Santa Barbara. Quizzed by oceanographers, a federal water pollution official conceded that he "didn't know the formulation of the chemical" Union Oil used. When the manufacturer's recommended dosage failed to disperse the gummy slick, Union Oil quadrupled the application — without success. Reliance was then



Seal, porpoise, and
graphed by DIC.
graphs were taken





Ordeal By Oil



placed upon mechanical controls, particularly the use of absorbent straw to sop up the oil before and after it reached the shore.

Local citizens reminded Interior Secretary Walter Hickel, after his survey of the disaster area in President Nixon's private plane, that they had repeatedly sought stronger federal controls over oil development. Hickel conceded that the catastrophe was "as much the fault of the government as anyone." Fred Hartley, president of Union Oil, was happy to agree; the trouble was, he told a congressional hearing, that "Mother Nature is letting the oil come up."



In response to demands that drilling cease in the channel, Governor Ronald Reagan said that Santa Barbara should be prepared to accept a "happy balance" between development and shoreline beauty. "In a growing economy, there has to be some 'give' on the part of those who would just preserve the nature of the countryside." Santa Barbara citizens feel they have already given more than enough.

It is too early for post-mortems; the damage is still being done. But it is already clear that the wildlife toll has barely begun to be counted, and that the environment will take years to recover. And an ominous fact emerges: the catastrophe could have occurred any day since drilling began, and it could happen again. The Texas specialists flown in to cap the well fought 11 offshore blowouts in 1968 alone, from the Persian Gulf to Venezuela. A member of the Texas crew put it bluntly: "Anyone who says he can guarantee his well won't blow out is either nuts or lying. The only way to promise that is to promise not to drill." This is the promise that citizens here are determined to get.

and two men in scow photo-
K SMITH. All other photo-
by SUSAN LANDOR.



Santa Barbara is a community with a forty-year tradition of concern for the environment, and there is a sense of destiny in the determination of its citizenry to make the Platform A disaster a conservation turning point. At congressional hearings, conservationists will press again for the program they advocated 18 months ago: for the establishment of a Channel Islands National Park and the dedication of a marine sanctuary, where drilling will be prohibited, in the 26-mile-wide Santa Barbara Channel between the islands and the mainland shore. Our town, and neighbors who have suffered with us, have a historic opportunity to dramatize the nation's need for a better and more livable environment.

Excerpts from:

HEARINGS
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON
INTERIOR AND INSULAR AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE
NINETY-FIRST CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

THE NOMINATION OF GOVERNOR WALTER J. HICKEL,
OF ALASKA, TO BE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

FOR FIVE DAYS, from January 15 to January 20, Alaska's Governor Walter J. Hickel testified before the Senate Interior Committee in what developed into the most controversial Cabinet appointment hearing of the decade. Before recommending Mr. Hickel's confirmation as Secretary of the Interior, the Senators questioned the Governor closely on his concept of wilderness, his attitude toward multiple use, and his thinking on other issues of paramount importance to conservationists.

Highlights from the proceedings are reprinted here from the official transcript of the hearings. However, the Government Printing Office rushed the transcript into print, and there are errors in proofreading. Where the Bulletin editors were sure of the nature of the mistake, the correction appears in brackets.

WILDERNESS

When Congress passed the Wilderness Act in 1964, it became a clear national policy that wilderness is a public good deserving protection, and it became the Secretary of the Interior's responsibility to oversee the implementation of the Act. Prior to the hearings, Governor Hickel publicized the fact that he saw no merit in withdrawing a large area and locking it up. Senator Frank Church of Idaho asked the Governor to explain his position.

Senator Church: On the general framework of that law. Do you think that setting aside these primitive areas, making them a part of the wilderness system, serves no purpose, and did you have that in mind when you made the statement that I referred you to?

Governor Hickel: Senator, I did not have that in mind. I think the Wilderness Act as brought forth by Congress is a

good act, and that really isn't just setting it aside for no reason. They generally have a reason for an idea. It might be an eagle's nest or it might be some other reason. Those are reasons, and I am in accord with that program. I did not have that in mind at all.

Later in the hearings Senator Nelson initiated a look in greater depth at the Governor's concept of wilderness.

Senator Nelson: If I may ask, what is your definition of a wilderness area?

Governor Hickel: A wilderness area would be an area untouched by human development. It could be a river flowing through a valley of a mountain. It would be an area where the American eagle nests and it is difficult to get to but it is picturesque and should be preserved, that general kind of thing. There is quite a bit of it in the West. You might even find a wilderness area in various parts of the East. It could be a seashore, could be a little different definition.

Senator Nelson: What is your view of the value of a wilderness area?

Governor Hickel: I think wilderness areas should be set aside for a group of people, that might possibly want to get away from the human development. They might want to take a canoe trip. They might want to go and just be outdoors away from all modes of transportation, and really their congested environment.

It would be a remote area. It may be remote in geographical location, but it would be remote from the standpoint of man-made objects.

Senator Nelson: What kind of management policy would you have for a wilderness area?

Governor Hickel: Again I think this is a matter that has been defined by legislation on the books stating there shall be no roads on that, and I understand that, and I think it is a good policy. I think that basically you have some sort of access through paths. The wilderness areas should be available to the greatest number that wanted to use them. I think this is the important thing.

Senator Nelson: What do you mean by available to the greatest number of people who want to use them?

Governor Hickel: Well, I think they should be in areas close enough to population that those people that want to use them can use them without too great an expense.

Senator Nelson: But of course there are rare pieces of genuine wilderness in population areas.

Governor Hickel: That is why I mentioned that it might be that we should take a look and see whether we should not even purchase land. It would have to be private, obviously, in some of the early States that did not have public lands. We should take a look to see what that is.

Senator Nelson: But I am talking about genuine wilderness and what your view about it is, and its value. That is what I am really concerned about.

Governor Hickel: Well, as a general thing, I know somewhat what the legislation refers to and what the intent is. I think that intent is right. I think it limits us to just about that area that I discussed. I think it has great value. You can find, as I mentioned, I mentioned the Tetons as just a general thing. You can find it throughout the West and find it somewhat in the Southwest in my mind as I see it. You can find an awful lot in my country, areas that would be most difficult to get to, but that would be superb to look at. Maybe you look at it from the standpoint of a water park, like Glacier National Monument. You can see just miles upon miles, hundreds of miles, of wilderness that it would be most difficult to ever have access. I think these are some of the real things that we should look for and preserve.

I know you probably do not know Glacier National Monument, but if you saw the hundreds of miles of just the wilderness, the inability really to do anything with it but look.

Senator Nelson: Do you believe that the preservation of the values of a wilderness area takes preeminence over the demand of people to go into it?

Governor Hickel: I would answer it this way, Senator. It goes to what I think collectively the Congress and the Executive should provide for the wise use and conservation of all its natural resources. I think we have to project ourselves beyond one year. I would like to look ahead to where we are going to have this real pressure from people, not only in the parks, but the total national resources of America. Then we can set some kind of guideline that we might be able to prevent something from happening that would be a disaster 20 years from now.

I would like to think that we would have the ability within the Department of the Interior to look ahead and try to figure out what are we going to do when you have these pressures.

Senator, I am sure you are aware that when a mass of people finally move there is no Secretary of Interior and, in reality, no President who can really withstand the pressure of all those people. The best thing we can do at this point is to establish guidelines.

MULTIPLE USE

Prior to the hearing, Governor Hickel's public statements had indicated an attitude favoring heavier capital improvements and even multiple use in the national parks and wildlife refuges. The Senators questioned the Governor at length on his ideas on park management.

Senator Nelson: When you use the words "multiple use" with respect to national parks, what do you mean by multiple use?

Governor Hickel: I think the uses for national parks are pretty well spelled out. I think there are areas, national monuments, for an example, where it is possible to have hunting on that area. It might be fishing, it could be some mineral resources, but we need to set the guidelines, we collectively as a government, State, Federal, and local. I think that it is possible to move forward many, many years when we have the press of population, and set the guidelines so that they really do not run away with it.

Senator Nelson: If I understand your position, you put emphasis on capital improvements in parks. What do you mean by that?

Governor Hickel: For an example, I hope you will pardon me for being specific, but I always think of Mount McKinley National Park as a vast park, a tremendous area, I do not know how many millions of acres at this time.

It had a hotel built in the thirties, a wood frame building, and there is no way you could see the mountain from there without driving another 90 miles or something like that.

My point is that I think it is somewhat the obligation of the Federal government, what I call the obligation of ownership, that we should develop these parks, even if the return may not be what we think should be, so that more people could utilize the park, and this vast, vast area. I think it is underdeveloped.

Now, there are other parks like that, but that is what I am thinking. I think that we should go in and make it possible for more than a small number of people.

Senator Nelson: Of course, if you put in more facilities and more roads and more lodges, you would presumably get more people. My question is what standard of measurement would you use for deciding how many people should in fact visit a park, a wilderness area. Parks are of various sizes, of

course. How would you make decisions about that? How would you evaluate that?

Governor Hickel: First, I would like to comment that when I visited with President Johnson about a week ago this very thing came up, and he showed me the charts of how the pressures have been on the parks. You have to take the size of the area, where the park is located, and I think by proper studies you could come up with a fairly good guideline of how many people that park might accommodate at one time, I think that could be done.

I do not think you should say it is only so many in a park, because it depends on the size of the park; the location of the park; how you handle people when they come there; what they do after they get there; and obviously that is an important consideration, what they can do after they get there. And so you could not be specific, but you could set guidelines.

Senator Nelson: Then do I understand that you would be prepared to be sure that before you would expand roads or put in any facilities or do anything that attracted additional visitors, that you would first get some evaluation of what kind of pressures that particular park or particular area could stand without degrading it?

Governor Hickel: That is the general idea. Senator, I am sure we both realize that with the pressure of population that we will not only have to set these guidelines, but there will be pressures to change them.

Senator Alan Bible of Nevada: Would you lean to the multiple use approach or would you make the parks that you are creating or recommend the parks you are creating have the pure park concept which, as you know, means you have no adverse uses at all?

Governor Hickel: I understand.

Senator Bible: Where do you lean?

Governor Hickel: Senator, I think there again it might be a case-by-case basis. It could be, and I have nothing specific in mind, that you would get some area in the highly congested East, wherever it might be, or any industrial area, and you might, in order to acquire these open spaces and the surface rights so people could walk and look, you might, and I don't say you have to, you might have to have a multiple use where you don't have the real public domain now.

I am not saying it would be the best, but it could be one of the things that would give the reason and take care of possibly the tax problem in a given locality where people could enjoy the surface rights, for example, and still have the use of whatever is underground.

In addition to trying to determine the Governor's probable policy on park management in general, the Interior Committee was also concerned about Governor Hickel's plans for a specific area, the Arctic Wildlife Range.

Senator Allott: As Governor of Alaska, you advocated the need for oil exploration on the Arctic Wildlife Range. Now,

would you like to discuss here your position on that question at the present time?

Governor Hickel: Yes, Senator Allott. That is up in the Arctic Slope, and the reason we requested geological exploration there was to try to find out just what reserves would be in that area and how they tied in with the great finds up further on the Prudhoe Bay. We are really only going into about a third of the northwestern corner, as I recall, about a third of the reserve. And the reason being, it was not for drilling or anything like that, but to find out and to catalog the State of Alaska. We do not really know what we have. And so it was trying to define those boundaries, boundaries that were without the reserve that we already knew. It was for the reason of knowledge and that was the reason for the request as Governor.

Senator Lee Metcalf of Montana: Now in this cataloging of these resources does it also mean that you are going to open that area (the Arctic Wildlife Range) to development and exploration in the multiple use concept that you suggest?

Governor Hickel: I have no intention whatsoever, if you are thinking about an oil derrick setting up there, no; but it ties in with the structure that comes out, goes out into the Arctic Ocean and it hits the northern third of that withdrawal, and we would like to find out, catalog, just where the structure is, and it is a matter of information. It does not have to be done. I assure you it does not have to be done, but I thought it would be in the best interest of both the State and Federal governments.

Senator Metcalf: This is only a cataloging of information?

Governor Hickel: That is absolutely right.

WATER POLLUTION

The 89th Congress empowered the Secretary of the Interior to set uniform national standards for water pollution control. The State of Alaska was one of the last states to comply with the requirements set by the Interior Department, and, as Governor, Mr. Hickel had made clear his opposition to these Federal standards.

Senator Nelson: Reading from the *Anchorage Daily Times* on January 2, 1968 [March 2, 1968], it quotes you as saying: "If the Federal Water Pollution Control Act affects our industry too much, we may have to tell the Federal Government to go fly a kite."

Another quote from the *Anchorage Daily Times*, the next, two days later, March 5, 1968: "I would like to tell the Federal Government that we cannot live within its laws."

What did you mean by those two statements?

Governor Hickel: First I am sure there will be a lot of things as Secretary of Interior, if I become confirmed and when I do, that I might have to reverse my opinions. But

basically we have a little unique problem, Senator, that I would like to mention to you.

One is we have the mountain power [pure] water and then we have glacier water. No life exists in glacial waters. It is very silted. As the glaciers melt, they form deltas, and with water like that, there is no real way that you can upgrade it. I do not think there would be any possibility of that or any thought.

It possibly had to do with some placer mine, that might be areas, close to a glacier stream, where that kind of input into a glacier stream would not affect it. What I am trying to say is that a glacier stream is unlike a normal mountain stream. But I cannot remember saying—I might have said it, it sounds like something I might have said—that the Federal Government can go fly a kite. I do not mean to be facetious.

Senator Nelson: I am curious to know what you may have meant by the sentence, "I would like to tell the Federal government that we cannot live within its laws," referring to its water quality standards.

Governor Hickel: I think we have ours approved now. I think all problems are gone, as far as I can see. The revised standards were officially submitted by the state on December 8, 1967, and were recommended for approval by Commissioner Quigley on January 5, 1968, and were approved by you on February 20, 1968. I do not think there is any real problem now. We had some to start with.

Senator Nelson: Are you saying that it did not represent a viewpoint of yours that the act and the standards established by the Secretary were not justifiable standards?

Governor Hickel: When it first came out we had some problems. I think many states did. I had to look at the Water Quality Act as it applied to my state at that time. We are now in agreement. The act is enforced, and I might say that we have a quite strict Water Quality Act program in Alaska. We know what pollution means Senator.

RAMPART DAM

As governor, Mr. Hickel supported the Rampart Dam proposal. This dam, planned for the Yukon River, would create a reservoir across Alaska's interior plateau larger in size than Lake Erie. Such a reservoir would flood an entire ecosystem, destroying the breeding grounds of 1½ million ducks and thousands of large game animals. Secretary Udall, during his tenure in office, rejected the proposal and recommended other developments to benefit the Alaskan economy.

Senator Metcalf: Mr. Chairman, I forgot to ask a question. I forgot to ask about Rampart Dam. You are certainly familiar with it. What are your views as to the construction of Rampart Dam?

Governor Hickel: Senator, I would like to comment before I answer directly that that is another one of those questions that isn't controversial. I think this. I know the report that came out on Rampart Dam. I know the opposition by some conservationists. I know some of their fears. I don't

share all their fears, probably for the reason that I know that vast area.

I think that some day, somewhere, somehow, Rampart Dam might be built. I don't want to say that I am going to do anything. You asked me for really a philosophical answer. To say it shouldn't be built would be to make a decision without really having all the facts as I see them. It relates to so many different problems in an arctic country. But, basically, we are living by that report. I do think some day Rampart Dam, probably beyond our time, will be built.

Senator Metcalf: It is possible, however, that during your career, during your tenure as Secretary of Interior you may send up to the Congress a recommendation that we build Rampart Dam.

Governor Hickel: As you said, it could be possible that that might happen. I sure won't make that decision on my own. That is too complicated. It is really an engineering economic problem along with the total aspect of wildlife. I think the problem is so immense that no one person would ever make that decision, unless possibly the President of the United States with the advice and consent of Congress, but I would have to have the voluminous amount of material that has been written about it and studied out before any decision was made. I have no intention of that at this time.

Senator Metcalf: As Secretary you would continue to study both as to the impact upon the fish and wildlife resources and the necessity for the development of power and the storage of water?

Governor Hickel: I absolutely would, because I think, to repeat myself, I think it is a great, great engineering project. I think it would do so much for so many, but to belabor the point any further than that would be just repetitious.

AN ALASKAN FIRST?

Following the public announcement of Governor Hickel's appointment as Secretary of the Interior, the Anchorage Daily News carried an article based on a telephone interview with the governor. According to this article, "The Governor made it clear that he regards Interior as the most strategic point in politics from which to set in motion programs which can benefit Alaska . . ." The committee was concerned about the Secretary-designate's Alaskan bias. Early in the hearings the Committee chairman, Senator Henry Jackson, questioned the Governor on this.

Chairman: Do you believe that you will be able to take an unbiased national view of your duties as Secretary, even where Alaska interests are involved?

Governor Hickel: Thank you, Senator Jackson. I believe sincerely that interests that Alaska might be involved in, whatever they might be, as Secretary of the Interior I will take the broad national interest because if it were for the betterment of the Nation as a whole, then it would be betterment for my country of Alaska. So I see no conflict in my mind and philosophy, and I would without a doubt, Mr. Chairman, take the broad national interest.

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"The Treasurer is directed to deposit contributions identified with *The New York Times* ad of January 14, 1969, in the treasury account of the club and to report such contributions as a Restricted Fund." As of February 28, 1969, these contributions have totalled \$1990.

- **Ad costs to be paid.** In two separate resolutions the Board acted to pay the costs of the ad. In the first motion, the Board voted that "The legal question as to the payment for preparation and publication of the ad in *The New York Times* on January 14, 1969, relating to a proposed 'Earth National Park,' is referred to the Legal Committee of the Sierra Club for further study." The second motion approved by the Board directed that "The Treasurer, President, and any other officers of the club be and hereby are authorized to pay for *The New York Times* advertisement of January 14, 1969, and any charges relating thereto for which the club is liable in the judgment of the Legal Committee under the doctrine of apparent or ostensible authority."

- **Brower granted leave of absence.** The Board approved the Executive Director's request for a leave of absence: "As you know, I am running for the Board and, whether or not elected, will submit my resignation as executive director May 3. I hope this action will bring into focus the big issues concerning club organization and will lead to solving of problems that really must be solved. Campaigning and being chief of part of the staff creates problems; failure to do the club work that is right and necessary will justify complaints about lack of performance; normal performance will result in charges of campaigning. It is not possible in this atmosphere to function effectively. I therefore request two months' leave without pay—the period between now and the election. I suspect we shall all rest easier while I am on leave, in the course of which the members can deliberate and settle the matter by voting." The leave of absence began February 10 and will end April 14, the Monday following the club elections.

- **Interim appointment of McCloskey.** Michael McCloskey, the club's Conservation Director, was appointed Acting Executive Director to serve until April 14. During this time, he will continue to serve as Conservation Director also.

CONSERVATION AND PUBLIC MATTERS

- **Santa Barbara Channel oil slick.** After Director Fred Eissler, a resident of Santa Barbara, California, described the oil drilling disaster in the Channel (see pages 8-9), the Board called for a moratorium on all offshore operations in the Channel and asked for a survey of offshore development policy. The resolution, offered by Eissler and unanimously approved, reads: "The Sierra Club calls upon all responsible units of government to exercise their authorities to treat the tidelands of the outer continental shelf and waters over it with full regard for the sensitive ecology that it supports. Specifically, (1) the club calls for a moratorium on all operations until assurances can be given that no repetition of the Santa Barbara disaster can occur. (2) The club asks for a

thorough investigation of the handling of the Santa Barbara disaster by Congress and state authorities. (3) The club urges enactment of state and federal legislation to survey the tidelands and outer continental shelf to identify not only mineral values in areas of drilling but also biological, scenic and social values that would be adversely affected by oil development. The survey should be conducted with a view toward zoning the shelf for various combinations of use, including the establishment of marine sanctuaries in the Santa Barbara Channel and elsewhere. The club urges enactment of strong state and federal controls to prevent pollution in state and outer continental shelf and territorial waters, including provisions regulating methods of spillage, clean-up, and establishing liability. Chemical preparations should not be used for cleanup purposes until state and federal agencies, after thorough short and long term tests, can certify that such chemicals will not endanger marine ecology. (5) The club urges that the existing federal leasing program be thoroughly reviewed both to determine the adequacy of protective restrictions and to prevent leasing in sensitive areas."

- **North coast dams.** The Board resolved, "Because of the drastic effects which impoundments would have on the ecology of the rivers of California's north coast, the Sierra Club opposes construction of dams on the mainstreams of the Klamath, Trinity, and Eel rivers." The Bureau of Reclamation, the Corps of Engineers, and California's Department of Water Resources are engaged in joint planning to devise a system of dams on California's three major north coastal streams: the Eel, the Klamath, and the Trinity. The main purpose is to divert about 10 million acre-feet of water to southern California through the canals of the California Water Plan. Because of the size of the dams planned, the salmon and steelhead runs—comparable in size to those of the Columbia River—are not likely to survive. One-third of the state's deer winter on these river bottoms; there is little likelihood that an alternative habitat can be provided. In addition, soil instability throughout much of the area and its susceptibility to earthquakes make major land movement inadvisable. Governor Reagan is expected to determine his position on the first of these dams, the Dos Rios project, at any moment.

- **San Francisco Bay Wildlife Refuge.** About 70 percent of the migratory birds using the Pacific Flyway depend on San Francisco Bay, the largest estuary on the Pacific Coast. The Sierra Club Board of Directors resolved that "In order to preserve critical waterfowl and wildlife habitat in the southern portion of San Francisco Bay, the Sierra Club endorses establishment of a National Wildlife Refuge there." The proposed refuge totals 16,000 acres and would include Greco Island and part of Bair Island in San Mateo County, the Coyote Hills Slough in Alameda County, and the Alviso area and part of Station Island in Alameda and Santa Clara counties. Bills to establish the wildlife refuge have been introduced in the new Congress.

• **San Francisco Bay given club priority.** To give the whole of the bay area and delta region greater emphasis in Sierra Club affairs, Director Siri offered the following motion which was approved by the Board: "The Sierra Club considers the San Francisco Bay and delta area to be one of the nation's most important estuarine areas and will take any appropriate measure to preserve and protect this estuarine system. In furtherance of this objective, the president is authorized to appoint a project coordinator."

• **Siskiyou wilderness proposal.** The Sierra Club has asked that 171,500 acres of the Siskiyou Mountains in the Klamath, Six Rixers, and Siskiyou National Forests be studied for wilderness potential. In light of a hearing set for February 26, the Board directed the club representatives in the drive to secure a Siskiyou Mountain Wilderness Area "to pursue a proposal for an ecologically balanced, topographically sound area, including forested wilderness areas of commercial value where necessary." Dr. Kurt Munchheimer represented the club at this hearing. In April the supervisors of the three national forests involved will present their final recommendations on land use to Regional Forester J. W. Deinema.

• **Ben Franklin dam.** Acting on the Pacific Northwest Chapter's recommendation, the Board of Directors resolved: "In order to preserve the last free-flowing reach of the Columbia River in the United States above tidewater, the Sierra Club urges that the scenic and natural values of the Columbia River above Richland, Washington, be preserved and thus opposes construction of the Ben Franklin dam which would inundate it." The proposed dam would flood the last 50 miles

of the river above tidewater that are still not impounded and is primarily designed to provide navigation to a point near the city of Wenatchee. A Corps of Engineers study is expected to be released soon, and then the issue will go before Congress.

• **Lompoc Narrows dam.** As recommended by the Los Padres Chapter, the Board resolved, "The Sierra Club believes that the remaining natural, scenic, and agricultural values of the watershed of the Santa Ynez River should be preserved, and thus opposes the construction of any dam on the river at or in the vicinity of the place known as Lompoc Narrows." The Bureau of Reclamation proposes to construct two dams on this California river for future water supply purposes in northern Santa Barbara County. Though higher water costs may be the price of protecting the valuable scenic, wildlife, and archeological values to be destroyed by these dams, future water supplies can be obtained from the State Water Plan. As soon as local commitments to purchase water are secured, Congressional authorization for the dams may be sought.

• **Rio Grande National Historical Park.** The Sierra Club Board of Directors voted to support establishment of a Rio Grande National Historical Park in New Mexico as proposed by the Rio Grande Chapter's Conservation Committee. More than six dozen sites of a natural, historical, or archeological significance exist in close proximity to each other along New Mexico's Rio Grande Valley. Although many of these are in public ownership or managed by public trusts, their interpretation and display is not well coordinated.

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retary for minerals; Carl L. Klein, former Illinois state legislator, as Assistant Secretary for water quality and research; and Mitchell Melich, formerly on the staff of Rep. Sherman Lloyd of Utah, as principal legal advisor to the Secretary of the Interior.

Wilderness Study Committee plans summer surveys The Sierra Club Council has announced plans for a new program of wilderness surveys during the summer of 1969. Under the auspices of the Council's Wilderness Reclassification Study Committee a series of trips is planned for July and August into critical areas in Wyoming and Montana. Primary target area for 1969 is an enormous defacto wilderness adjacent to the Absoraka Area (primitive) in southwestern Montana. The trips this summer will be similar in nature to the trail maintenance and clean-up parties presently being operated by the Outing Committee. Plans are to set up a series of small base camps from which survey parties can operate. Ample time

for recreational pursuits in some of the finest wilderness left will be available between survey assignments. The committee will provide food, and meals will be prepared on a cooperative basis. The committee is actively seeking club members with strong outdoor backgrounds who have the time and wish to participate in the program. Individuals or families interested in participating are asked to contact Francis Walcott, Apt. 14, 3500 Fulton Street, San Francisco, Calif. 94118.

**Sierra Club
Annual Banquet
May 3 in Berkeley**

Color slides taken during expeditions to Nepal in 1967 and 1968 will be featured at the Sierra Club's Annual Banquet May 3 at the Claremont Hotel in Berkeley. Leo Le Bon, a Sierra Club member who has made climbs in Europe, South America, New Zealand, the United States, and the Himalayas will show slides from the expeditions, including scenes of the Mount Everest base camp and Katmandu. For further information contact Luella Sawyer, 1050 Mills Tower, 220 Bush Street, San Francisco, Calif. 94104.


Washington Report _____ by W. Lloyd Tupling

AN OUTPOURING OF CRUDE OIL from a well drilled in the ocean floor of the Santa Barbara Channel sparked action on long-delayed oil pollution control regulations. The catastrophic blowout also called attention to shortcomings in federal law in dealing with related oil pollution problems that are potentially as hazardous to the environment as the Santa Barbara incident. Indeed, Secretary of the Interior Walter Hickel discovered that the regulations covering oil exploration on the outer continental shelf had not been reviewed for 15 years.

Secretary Hickel acted quickly to correct that situation. On February 17, he issued new regulations making oil companies responsible for cleaning up pollution caused by offshore drilling. Hickel's order places responsibility for control and removal of pollution directly on the oil companies without requiring any proof that the companies might be at fault. Thus, the appearance of an oil slick becomes prima facie evidence of liability. Moreover, the Hickel regulations provide that if a company does not move quickly to abate the pollution, then the federal government can take over the clean-up at the expense of the company. The new secretary can be credited with implementing regulations far more stringent than those called for in proposals before Congress last year which failed to pass in the waning days of the last session.

Much remains to be done, however, in the control of oil pollution from other sources. As a special 1968 report to President Johnson pointed out, "the risks of contamination by oil and other hazardous substances are as numerous and varied as the uses made of the many materials and the means of transporting them." These risks involve terminals, water-side industrial plants, loading docks, refineries, tankers, freighters, barges, pipelines, tank cars, trucks, filling stations — everywhere that oil is used, stored, or moved. "There are countless opportunities for oil to get out of control," the report stated.

The Corps of Engineers has reported that there were over 2,000 oil spills within U.S. waters during 1966, 40 percent from land-based facilities. When we consider that some 220 billion gallons of petroleum products are used annually in the U.S., the potential for trouble is enormous. Oil out of control

is an insidious contaminant. Oil on water is a seeker, and once it finds something to cling to; it does not readily let go. Clean-up is costly, often ineffective, and frequently harmful. The Torrey Canyon grounding off the southern coast of England is an example. Emulsifiers used to "wash away" oil from the ship's ruptured tanks were found to be detrimental to aquatic life in the area.

The report stated that problems are also posed by the pipelines laid on the ocean floor from platforms to storage facilities. Structural standards for offshore platforms have been adopted by industry, but many of these have been damaged or destroyed in the Gulf Coast area by hurricanes more severe than they were designed to withstand. Since 1960, some 6,000 wells have been drilled in the Gulf of Mexico. Compounding the hazard is the fact that no charts are available to mariners showing the locations of all these structures, or showing the 1,800 miles of pipelines in the Gulf. These lines are subject to rupture by storms and the dragging of ships' anchors.

These problems were among subjects discussed at several days of hearings called by Senator Edmund Muskie, Chairman of the Senate's Subcommittee on Air and Water Pollution, early in February. Specifically, the sessions dealt with provisions of S. 7, the Water Quality Improvement Act of 1969. In addition to oil pollution, Muskie's proposal calls for new procedures to deal with thermal pollution and for control of sewage from vessels.

In a related development, Representative Edward Garmatz of Maryland, Chairman of the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, called hearings on H.R. 6495, his bill to designate the Coast Guard as the lead agency in oil pollution abatement. Referring to the Santa Barbara disaster, Garmatz remarked that "information on this clean-up effort leads me to believe the Coast Guard could fight this oil spill more efficiently if a confusing multi-agency effort were not involved." Muskie's bill gives primary authority to the Interior Department. Some conservationists are concerned that legislative action on the oil pollution abatement bills might get bogged down in jurisdictional disputes between House and Senate committees, something that would only mean additional delay in the enactment of needed new statutes.