

SENATE TALK
WASH D.C.

Gentlemen:

My name is A. B. Curtis, Mayor of the City of Orofino, Idaho, which office I have held since 1951. I am also a long-time resident of the area, having come to Orofino in October of 1912. I am chairman of the Water Resources Committee of the Orofino Chamber of Commerce and a director for Idaho of the Inland Empire Waterways Association at Walla Walla, Washington. I have been active for many years in the management work of our forest resources, and since 1927 have been continuously employed in forestry activities in the watershed of the North Fork of the Clearwater River. It has been my pleasure to learn at first-hand the terrain, the forest and its problems.

Today I appear in behalf of the people and many organizations of the area who are vitally interested in the Bruce Eddy project and the economics of the region. I speak in favor of the Bruce Eddy project and urge the necessary legislation for an immediate start of the project. The people of the area are in desperate need of the full development of the resources of the region, of which water is an important part. Our community and the surrounding area is, as you know, a chronic depressed area, and our faltering economy is in dire need of help to provide the means of a better economy. We feel that we have the right to ask for an opportunity to become a better part of a fine state and great nation. The Bruce Eddy project will permit a higher degree of opportunity to better economic well-being.

Our region is one abounding in resources as yet not working in teamwork and is out of balance in its effort to effect a stable economy. The Bruce Eddy project

will do much to provide employment in the few years ahead and will, likewise, contribute greatly toward a better plan for economic stability.

FLOOD CONTROL

The North Fork of the Clearwater River is a major water producing area of the Columbia River basin. With the Clearwater River totally uncontrolled, a plan for control of spring runoff has on the loose a wild river that threatens economic development in the valley below. It was the Vaport Disaster on the lower Columbia River which focused attention on the Clearwater River when many millions of dollars, as well as human lives, were lost.

The 1948 flood appears to be the disaster which started reviews of the flooding rivers to seek greater control so badly needed in the fast-growing Northwest. That year the Clearwater River discharge was 177,000 cfs, 100,000 of which came from the North Fork. Eleven percent of the flooding Columbia River at The Dalles, Oregon during the spring flood of 1948 was contributed by the Clearwater. This is good reason for the frequent statement that the Clearwater River is the offender.

NAVIGATION

Inland navigation from the Pacific to Lewiston, Idaho will be benefitted by the upstream storage that Bruce's Eddy affords. The lower Snake River dams from Pasco to Lewiston are well advanced in the construction period and the importance of Bruce's Eddy which complements these projects cannot be neglected.

Vast forest resources of state, private and federal lands around and above the proposed Bruce's Eddy pool will be under better cropping and management plans with the water transportation facilities that the Bruce's Eddy project will afford.

Forest resources of the area will be better managed and harvested.

Present forest stands of the area are in some instances difficult to harvest economically and need transportation facilities to better reach the competitive market. It is for this reason that local people are concerned with routes of travel into the pool area and bridges to permit crossings at logical locations. This is important so the forest land, the compaxion resource, can be successfully managed.

Also of importance to the successful harvest of the tree crop is shore line property, which approximates 183 miles. Tentatively, 98.4 miles will be private ownership, 44 miles State of Idaho, 40.6 miles U.S. (U.S.F.S. and B.L.M.). Shore line ownership status should remain in the present ownership pattern and the approximate 300 feet acquisition of additional acreage around the perimeter of the proposed pool should be limited to those shore line properties now in public ownership. This will afford the logical use of the pool for milling and transportation of forest products from planned points of development, and will also give some tax benefit to support governmental units.

Finally, log and forest product passing facilities at the dam site are important. Several means of transportation from the dam site to downstream points of manufacturing, or use, may be selected by the industries who produce in the region.

RECREATION

Recreation is a hoped for by-product of the Bruce Eddy project. Tourism and its related activities will do much to stimulate new income into the area. Water sports, fishing and other outdoor activities have developed throughout the nation where man-made lakes have resulted from dam construction. The people of our region are in hopes of the full development of this resource for many more people than now enjoy the Clearwater River country.

Opposition to the Bruce Eddy project has been expressed by some ill-informed wildlife enthusiasts who have been led to believe that the Idaho elk herd will be lost. The recent "Report on Fish & Wildlife Resources Affected by Bruce Eddy Dam and Reservoir Project North Fork Clearwater River Idaho", dated August 1962 is a sample of misleading propaganda for public consumption.

Such misleading and ill-intended reports are very detrimental to the full-use concept of our resources. There certainly is no fine example for complete use than the North Fork of the Clearwater River basin where we can grow trees, harvest our forest products and have a great outdoor activity including fishing and hunting.

Wildlife reports indicate much larger elk population figures than official counts. The Middle Fork and South Fork of the Clearwater River have a much greater elk population than the 5,329 actually counted by helicopter in the North Fork of the Clearwater drainage. A recent report of the Idaho Fish & Game Department reported approximately 80,000 elk in Idaho. Some people imply that they would be lost. Such a fallacy? Never until the studies of Bruce Eddy did wildlife clubs have interest in the North Fork of the Clearwater River. The North Fork has always been an important timber producing area and is well managed by state, federal and private owners. There are no dude ranches or hunting and big game activities in the area that will be affected by the Bruce Eddy dam. Over 95% of the reported 5,329 elk in the basin are from 20 to 50 miles upstream, far above the maximum pool elevation of 1,600 feet. Big game surveys have reported only a few scattered animals in the lower portions of the North Fork, and in recent counts no elk have been seen to range or migrate into the area.

Emphasis should be made on the point that the Bruce Eddy pool area is quite industrialized and has many logging and forest products camps. There are

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several thousand miles of forest roads, small communities, settlers here and there and generally an area of diversified use by stockmen, loggers and people who are gainfully occupied. It is not a wild area in any sense of the word. In fact, Bruce Eddy is closer to civilization than any other dam project in Idaho excepting American Falls. It is so close to Orofino suburbs, its water may be eventually used for municipal purposes.

Orofino in October of 1932. I am a member of the Water Resources Committee of the Orofino Chamber of Commerce and a director for Idaho of the Inland Empire Waterways Association of Walla Walla, Washington. I have been active for many years in the management of our forest resources, and since 1925 have been continuously employed in forestry activities in the watershed of the South Fork of the Clearwater River. It has been my pleasure to learn at first-hand the terrain, the forest and its problems.

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