

Federal Government Entering Land Grab Era, Curtis Says

MOSCOW — The federal government is entering the "era of the land grab" around Dworshak dam and faces a dilemma farther north in the Coeur d'Alene mining district, panelists told the North Idaho Chamber of Commerce and visiting Idaho legislators Thursday.

A. B. (Bert) Curtis, mayor of Orofino and a strong force behind construction of the \$210 million dam on the North Fork of the Clearwater River, said private ownership rights to land bordering the 53-mile lake the dam will create are becoming more in conflict between the government and theories of western landowners. He said it exemplifies a "land grab" policy of the federal government.

Curtis also announced that the primary contract for the 673-foot-high dam, estimated by the Army Corps of Engineers to be \$123 million, is scheduled to be awarded in 16 months. He said the Corps of Engineers has approved plans for a second bridge

in north Idaho," Rahm said. "Bark beetle populations are reaching epidemic proportions in some areas."

"We may have to move and move quickly to head off serious



NEAL M. RAHM

losses within our commercial forests, in our recreation areas and on our watersheds.

"Should insect epidemics cause us to move quickly next year, I should like to have you feel reassured that we will not expose you or your families to unknown pesticides and untried hazards. Any work which we do will have been approved by scientists of national stature."

Work Been Slowed

Rahm said a lack of understanding of multiple use of forest lands "has hampered Forest Service progress" in gaining public approval and explained "we seek combinations of uses which will offer the greatest good for the greatest number in the long run."

Rahm said special problems of the Forest Service include "timber waste within the Canyon block on the Clearwater National Forest. Here, some 48 million board feet of timber are lost to insects and disease each year. We are building main access roads to this area. Soon timber purchasers will be able to begin a tremendous salvage operation."

Curtis said a joint policy of the Department of the Army and Department of Interior has changed in two years the acquisition policy on minimum distances that private land can be developed on the Dworshak dam pool.

He said this band of land that will remain out of bounds for private builders has been increased from a minimum of 100 to 300 feet to 300 feet. Curtis said the change, which is opposed by the Western Forestry & Conservation Ass'n, to which he belongs, is "not the result of a change in the law but of a change in interpretation."

Halt Deep Freeze—Curtis

Curtis urged the chamber and visiting Idaho lawmakers to work to put an end to placing private lands "into the public deep freeze." He said 1.5-million acres of western land goes into this freezer each year.

In addition to the bridge to be built across the pool at Granddad Creek (halfway point on the reservoir) another span is being asked at Little Canyon. He said this bridge would be 1,980 feet long and would exceed 500 feet in height.



A. B. CURTIS

across the dam reservoir to "keep Clearwater County from being divided by the reservoir" and said tourism is the answer to avoiding a recession after the dam is built.

The mining problem reported to the chamber in a message from C. E. Schwab, president of the Bunker Hill Co. at Kellogg, is in control of silver markets and production, "the well-being of this metal depending to a great extent on what the decision will finally be as the Treasury Department and the Congress try to solve their dilemma of consumption (industrial and monetary) continuing to far outstrip mine production, and what changes will be made in our subsidiary coinage changes."

Mining Growth Expected

Schwab, in a speech delivered by Jerry Turnbow, Bunker Hill industrial relations administrator, said "as a whole, I believe the look ahead into 1965 will provide a situation for continued mining industry growth and at levels commensurate to attract the venture capital required to maintain and improve these operations."

Schwab was unable at the last minute to travel to Moscow.

The third panelist at the afternoon session of the chamber, Neal M. Rahm of Missoula, northern region forester for the U.S. Forest Service, said insects are causing severe damage in western forests.

"The tussock moth and the larch casebearer are widespread