

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

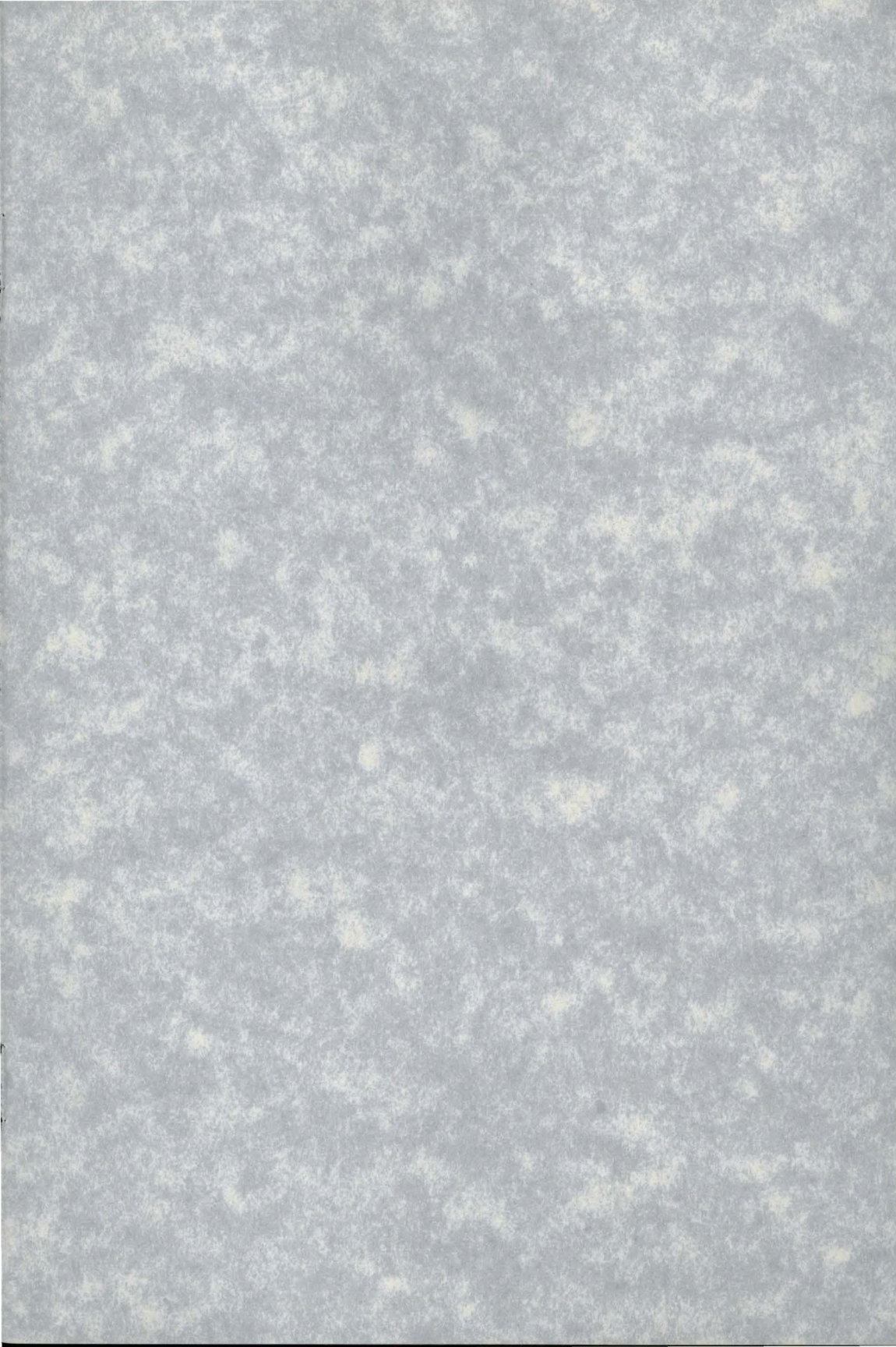
CECIL D. ANDRUS



WILDERNESS RESOURCE

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*REORGANIZATION AND
THE DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES:
IMPLICATIONS FOR
WILDERNESS*

Cecil D. Andrus

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO WILDERNESS RESEARCH CENTER

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Dean's Introduction

It is my distinct pleasure to introduce Secretary of the Interior, Cecil D. Andrus, this year's honored speaker in the University of Idaho's third annual Wilderness Resource Distinguished Lecture Series.

In many ways, this is like welcoming Secretary Andrus back home. During his six years as governor of Idaho, he had an active interest in our university and, in fact, was instrumental in establishing the University of Idaho Wilderness Research Center, which is the sponsor of this annual lectureship.

In the way of background information, I will be brief, but should point out that the Secretary got his start in the woods! In fact, he grew up in logging country, has worked in a sawmill, and made his home for a while in Orofino. At the early age of 29 he began his public service career as state senator from Clearwater County. In 1970 he was elected to his first term as governor of Idaho, and as many of you will remember, he was re-elected governor in 1974 by the largest margin in the state's history. Finally, in January of 1977, he joined President Carter's cabinet as our 42nd Secretary of the Interior of the United States.

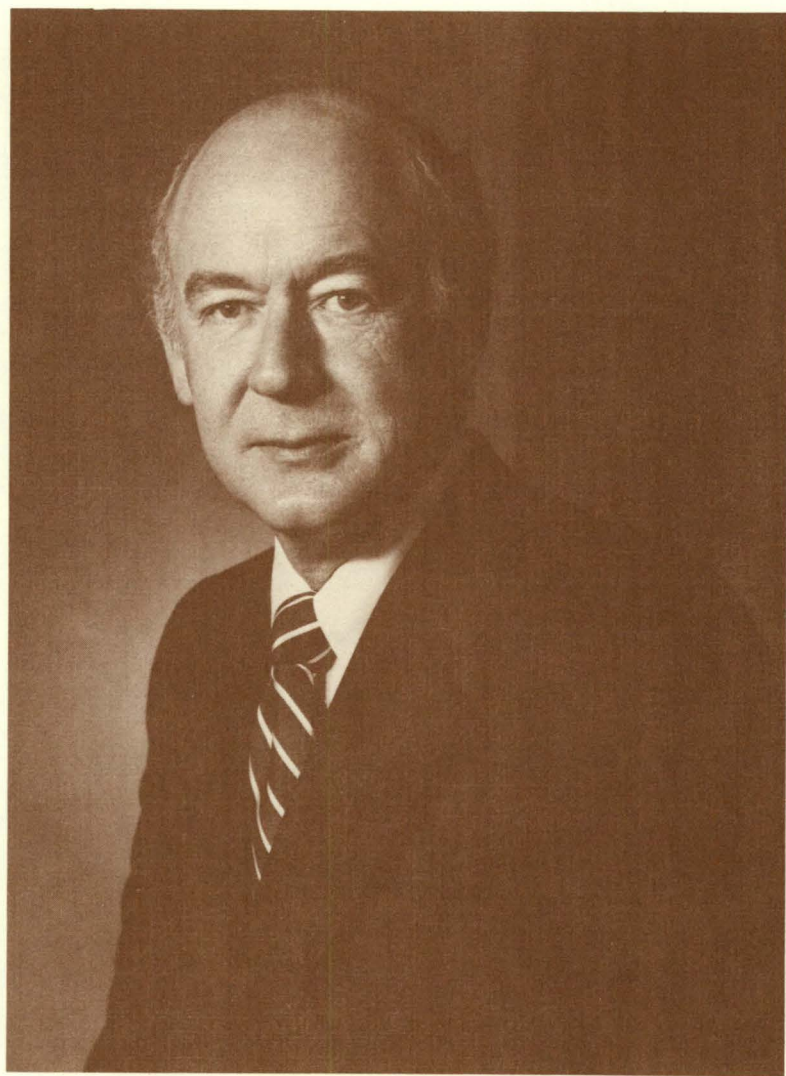
In introducing Secretary Andrus, I think it is very appropriate to quote something that he said in his inaugural address back in 1975. He said, "Conservation is no longer a pious ideal, it is an element of our survival." As governor, and as secretary of the interior, Mr. Andrus has let that be his guide. He has also demonstrated the rare ability to balance *economic* considerations with less tangible benefits and values when facing the tough decisions related to the use of natural resources.

Today, Mr. Andrus faces unique challenges in helping to guide the future of resource management not only in the lower forty-eight states, but particularly in Alaska, which is passing through a critical period in its young history. He is also deeply involved in the question of reorganization of the Departments of Interior and Agriculture. This will be his topic today, and it gives me a great deal of pleasure to welcome Secretary of the Interior, Cecil Andrus.



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REORGANIZATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES: IMPLICATIONS FOR WILDERNESS

Cecil D. Andrus

When I was growing up here in the Northwest, we lived in the midst of a great, relatively undeveloped area. De facto wilderness was abundant. Pressures of growth were the farthest things from our minds.

Even 20 years ago when I was a young man struggling to support my family in what I called the “slab, sliver and knothole business,” we had little realization of the stresses we were starting to put on the land, or of the severe stresses about to close in on us. Regretfully, I can recall skidding logs down streambeds—because that was the easiest way to move them—and because those of us in logging in those good old days simply did not know any better. We were too engrossed in the everyday effort of earning a living to consider the long-term damage our activity might cause to fish and wildlife, to the streams, rivers and watershed, to the forests, and to the land itself. We thought, as our parents and grandparents and earlier generations had thought, that the natural resources of this continent were inexhaustible.

About that time—about two decades ago—strong winds of change were beginning to blow. Caught up in these winds, and inspired by the words of Senator John F. Kennedy when he came to Lewiston to speak, my own perspectives began to change. By the time I was sworn in as the youngest member of the Idaho State Senate in 1961, I was beginning to have an inkling of the need for all of us—in Idaho and across the nation—to take better care of our natural resources. I was beginning to understand that there is more to life than earning a living—that after earning a living we must have a life that is worthwhile.

During the 1960s there was a dramatic increase in our nation's environmental awareness. When I ran for Governor of Idaho in 1970, I sensed that the people of Idaho also had a growing concern for the health and beauty of our state as well as its economy. They required jobs, but after work they wanted mountains and valleys where they could hike and camp, rivers and streams where they could fish, areas where they could enjoy nature. My opponent believed the old "rape, ruin and run" philosophy toward natural resources still prevailed.

We had the perfect issue to test our conflicting assessments of the strength of the environmental ethic in the state of Idaho. That issue was whether there should be open pit mining for molybdenum at the foot of Castle Peak in the beautiful central Idaho White Cloud Mountains. I argued it would be wrong to jeopardize this area by mining a mineral which was then—and is today—in surplus. My opponent argued for the mine.

Contrary to the advice of most of my friends and supporters, I made this the central theme of my campaign. It was a clear-cut, black and white issue for the voters. They could choose between an incumbent who represented continued wide open development, or a new candidate who demonstrated environmental concern.

Arguing that we must not allow irreplaceable natural resources to be destroyed for temporary economic gain, I was one of the first to run for public office in the West with environmental concern as a major issue.

To virtually everyone's surprise, I won. The people of Idaho agreed with me that after we have earned a living, it must be worthwhile.

In his new book, *Footprints on the Planet*, Bob Cahn stated it this way:

It makes no sense to preserve the environment at the cost of national economic collapse. Nor does it make sense to maintain stable industrial productivity at the cost of clean air, clean water, parks and wilderness.¹

The people of Idaho reaffirmed this philosophy in 1974, when more than seven out of ten voted for my re-election. I am convinced the people of Idaho continue to believe that their government—local, state and federal—must have a strong commitment to provide balanced management of natural resources.

In discussing the evolution of national attitudes and Federal policy toward natural resources, I, like others, have compared the life of our nation with the life of a person—with my own life. The young, of course, are blessed with boundless enthusiasm, ambition and energy. During our youth as a nation, we had abundant natural resources, and we used them as necessity dictated. We were anxious to populate the land and to build a strong country. But in our rush to populate the continent and to increase the productive capacity of America, we made some of the mistakes of youth. We needlessly destroyed portions of our natural heritage.

The Challenges of Today's Frontier

Today we have achieved maturity as a nation. This maturity dictates that we begin practicing common sense in judging how we use our resources. We are now probing the outer limits of our *natural frontiers*.

Today's *frontier* is facing our problems and not trying to escape them by moving over yonder hill to virgin territory.

Today's *frontier* is making the tough decisions between what natural resources we should develop today, and what natural resources must be conserved both to provide future options and to maintain a healthy natural world.

Today's *frontier* does *not* involve conquering nature.

Today's *frontier* lies in conquering our own worst habits of waste, indifference or selfishness in use of natural resources.

Evolution of a New Land Ethic

The realization that we must become better stewards of our natural resources blossomed during the past 15 years, but the roots are deep in the history of this land. The Indians who were here when the first Europeans arrived tried to tell us centuries ago. Here in the West, Chief Joseph tried to tell us when he said:

*Do not misunderstand me, but understand me fully with reference to my affection for the land . I never said the land was mine to do with as I chose. The one who has the right to dispose of it is the one who created it . . .*²

Some of the early settlers in America saw the need for conservation, but our people were too busy making a nation

to pay much attention. Early in this century, Teddy Roosevelt gave a great boost to the conservation movement. Some 71 years ago, he said:

*To waste, to destroy, our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the days of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them amplified and developed.*³

Slowly, Federal policy evolved from disposal of public land to maintenance of the public lands for the public good. Slowly, our Federal government has come to see the importance of preserving wild areas. The first wilderness was set aside in 1924. Yet it was another 40 years before Congress enacted the National Wilderness Preservation Act, which defined wilderness legally.

Each of us, of course, has his own definition of wilderness and what it means. The concept of wilderness enables use and enjoyment of an area by hunters, backpackers, photographers, fishermen, boaters, floaters, researchers, outfitters, guides and pilots—all on a renewable basis that does minimum damage to the environment and creates minimum interference with the natural fish and game cycles. Perhaps most important is the fact that wilderness gives priority to conservation of the wildlife, trees and plants which are vital to our natural world.

There is understandable controversy over what is—or what should be—wilderness. Wilderness today may have been created by God, but it is certified by Congress. At present there are some 19 million acres of congressionally-designated wilderness. More than 15 million acres of this is in our national forest system under the Department of Agriculture. Somewhat less than 4 million acres is under jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior. Also pending before Congress

are proposals endorsed by the Administration which would add 23 million acres to the wilderness system.

Just last week, President Carter announced he will recommend that more than 15 million acres of national forest land be added to the wilderness system. Another 10 million acres will be given further study. Some 36 million acres would be made available for multiple use. These recommendations come from the Roadless Area Review and Evaluation, "RARE II" in popular parlance, conducted by the USDA Forest Service.

The Administration's latest recommendations would bring to 3.4 million acres the amount of Federal land in Idaho which has been proposed for addition to the wilderness system. The President's announcement last week would mean another 230,000 acres for the proposed River of No Return Wilderness, increasing the proposal to 2.16 million acres.

At this time we have relatively little acreage officially in the National Wilderness System. There are only 19 million acres of designated wilderness out of some 760 million acres under Federal jurisdiction. That is *less than 3 percent*.

Even if Congress were to approve all currently recommended wilderness areas, even if we were to add 50 million acres of wilderness in Alaska, if the areas recommended for wilderness classification in RARE II were to be added, and if all the areas recommended for further study as part of RARE II were eventually put into wilderness—if all of these actions were taken, there still would be only about 118 million acres of wilderness—less than 16 percent of the 760 million federally-owned acres in America.

To put it into a much more meaningful context, it is only about 5 percent of the 2.3 billion acres which make up the gross area of the United States. Five percent is precious

little to set aside for the regeneration of the natural world essential to maintain a planet worth living on.

Let me emphasize my belief that it is in the best interest of the wilderness movement that we expedite actions which will clear the way for development of natural resources in areas where wilderness characteristics do not exist. We must continue intelligent development of America, but on *what* lands, is the question.

There is suspicion among many that people who are pro-wilderness must be anti-development. There is a suspicion that some people opposed to all types of energy development and other economic activity are misusing the wilderness program to slow economic development. There is a belief—I see it in the mail every day and hear it almost everywhere I travel—that there is a bunch of people out there who somehow want to force us all to return to a cave-dweller era.

Although I haven't researched it carefully, I will say that there appear to be two types of humans who try to make up in clamor what they lack in numbers. One of these is the "Neo-caveman," who would bring all economic development to a halt. The other is the "Hyper-economian," who would sacrifice the last tree, the last unscarred landscape, the last pure water, the last non-human creature (and perhaps even some human creatures) in his obsession with development and his satanic vision of progress.

Between these two extremes lie the vast majority of Americans who want a decent standard of living and feel there must be economic development of natural resources, but who also are beginning to grasp the importance of wild areas and of the need to save enough of the natural world to maintain human life itself. Although many of these people may never backpack into the wilderness, they have come to appreciate and enjoy it, just by knowing it's there.

“Getting It All Together”

So far, I have dwelled on the evolution of a new land ethic in America. With our maturity have come a series of programs which improve the way in which we use and care for our natural resources. Especially during this past decade, there have been a series of laws and actions which have established a strong conservation ethic.

But something is missing. Harking back to our analogy of national growth and human growth—a mature, experienced and well-intentioned person remains at a serious disadvantage in life if he is disorganized. The successful person has to be able to “get it all together.” Likewise, our Federal policy for management of natural resources, to be fully efficient, effective, comprehensive and coordinated, must be well organized. We must be able to “get it all together.”

At present, Federal organization for managing our natural resources is scattered, cumbersome and wasteful. This is especially evident in our land management agencies which are housed in two different departments. On one hand, this arrangement creates barriers to the formation of comprehensive national policy. On the other hand, it creates duplication of effort, inconsistency of regulations, and lack of coordination. This is *frustrating* to individuals who want to use the resources; *frustrating* to state and local officials who must deal with the Federal agencies; *frustrating* to taxpayers who demand efficiency in government; and most of all, *frustrating* to everyone who believes government should be responsive to the mandate of the people.

Let's talk specifically about why a Department of Natural Resources as proposed by President Carter would improve wilderness programs. The most important benefit

would be the existence—at long last—of one department which could provide an integrated, coordinated national policy for the creation and preservation of wilderness areas. We would no longer have to cope with complex natural resources issues through a patchwork of agencies created in earlier times in response to problems of the past.

What we are proposing is to put all of these agencies under a Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Then we will provide an internal structure in this department which will closely coordinate all the Federal land management policies. Federal policy would be strong and clear, but program responsibilities would be carried out with the maximum possible decentralization so that Federal officials in the field don't have to turn to Washington for every decision.

User groups have been yelling that the time has come to decide how much wilderness is enough. They have viewed the Forest Service RARE II as having marched along, cutting them off from timber, mineral and other resources they feel are vital to their own well-being and to the nation. Now they see the BLM (Bureau of Land Management) setting out on its wilderness review, marching to its own drummer. They want to know who is calling the tune. And rightly so.

With DNR *we will have a focal point; we will have one department where we can establish a policy* and a rationale for it. If the policy displeases industry, industry will know where to place the blame. And just as industry has a "target" to draw a bead on if it feels shorted, so do conservationists, preservationists, environmentalists and the like.

It is obvious that it would have been much preferred to have the Forest Service and the BLM wilderness reviews proceed at the same time and in concert rather than independently. Although we are making attempts at coordination, there are instances where the Forest Service process and our own process are at odds.

With reorganization the two agencies will be brought together in a single administration. They will be able to develop united review methods and criteria for recommendations on wilderness suitability. This will simplify the process for consideration of citizen and congressional suggestions regarding recommendations for contiguous roadless areas.

The Alaska Case

With reorganization we will be able to achieve that elusive "balance" we talk so much about—the balance between development and preservation, the balance among the various degrees of protection needed to save land and wildlife. We have an outstanding example of how this can be achieved when one agency is clearly in charge. The Administration's program for Alaska National Interest Lands is, we think, a case study in balancing competing objectives. Almost all land in Alaska would qualify as "wilderness" under either the legal or colloquial definition of the word, so the debate has never been over the wilderness quality of the land.

Early recommendations for wilderness protection in Alaska went unheeded because the region was sufficiently protected by its remoteness, climate and the cost of doing business there. With Alaska statehood in 1959 it became clear that the days of the Alaska frontier were coming to an end. Congress awarded the new state of Alaska 104 million acres as its statehood grant—that is larger than the state of California—28 percent of its land compared with the 7 percent Idaho received when it became a state.

Among the first land selected by the state of Alaska was the site of the Prudhoe Bay oilfield. The discovery of the largest American oilfield at Prudhoe in 1968 set off a series of reactions that suddenly brought Congress face to

face with the reality that Alaska's wilds were no longer impervious to outside influence.

In 1971 Congress passed the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, which granted 44 million acres to Alaska's natives. At the same time, Congress directed the Secretary of the Interior to study the public lands in Alaska and make recommendations for additions to the national conservation systems—national parks, wildlife refuges, wild and scenic rivers and national forests. Congress gave itself until mid-December of last year to act on those recommendations.

The proposals we developed in 1977 for 92.5 million acres of new conservation areas, including about 50 million acres of new legal wilderness, were the product of three fortunate and interlocking sets of circumstances:

—First, the Interior Department was able to work as a single management unit on the majority of proposals from beginning to end.

—Second, the Department was able to call upon years of research done in the hope that such an opportunity for its use might occur, as well as research done specifically to make sure that our recommendations were accurate and up to date.

—Third was President Carter's strong commitment to an integrated approach to assure this would be a model of the way resource conservation and development work ought to be done.

Using the resources of the National Park Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, the U.S. Geological Survey and the Bureau of Land Management, we were able to marshal the most complete picture of Alaska's resources ever put together. Because the Carter Administration has a deep commitment to conservation, we were able to work closely with the Forest Service

to develop proposals for national forest wilderness in southeast Alaska. We feel that the 7.6 million acres of national forest wilderness that we seek will not harm the existing timber industry of Alaska, and that it is essential to continued existence of the important Alaska coastal fishing industry.

Of course, there were some coordination problems in developing these proposals in two different Cabinet level departments, no question about it. That is one reason why I am such an enthusiastic supporter of the DNR concept. I am convinced that if this work had been spread among more agencies it might still be going on. In a government as sprawling as ours, there is simply no way to coordinate a multitude of agencies and departments in a way that will be both timely and reasonable unless they are under one umbrella.

When Congress failed to meet its own 1978 deadline for protection of Alaska's crown jewels, the President and I were forced to exercise our administrative authority. Using the Antiquities Act of 1906 and land withdrawal authority previously granted to the Secretary of the Interior, we have protected the best of our Federal lands. Meanwhile, Congress is working on legislation once again. Early committee action has not been encouraging, but I am confident that Congress will enact a bill which will provide the wilderness, parks, refuges, wild and scenic rivers and national forests we need to protect the vital natural areas of this magnificent state. Congress also will soon have its opportunity to review the President's proposal for a Department of Natural Resources.

Wilderness Would Benefit

In describing the progress of the wilderness movement, and in describing our program for Alaskan lands, I have tried to illustrate some of the benefits which would come through a Department of Natural Resources. We would have coordinated, consistent and efficient programs and policies to decide which areas should be designated as wilderness. We would eliminate situations where actions by one agency on

land it manages impair the wilderness potential of adjacent or nearby land administered by another Federal agency. We will be able to actually manage our Federal land and its resources rather than to continue playing a guessing game with each agency pursuing its own goals.

I look forward to the day when our governmental structure is such that we can draw all the necessary data together, fully analyze the range of conservation and preservation programs, assess the economic sacrifice of wilderness, assess the economic and environmental benefit of wilderness, and assess the environmental costs of sacrificing potential wilderness to various forms of development. We must be able to study the interrelationships of the areas, of the natural elements of the areas, of the many environmental and economic impacts of various combinations of decisions.

Until we have the organizational framework to assemble this data, to analyze this data, and to propose comprehensive policies and programs based on these findings, we will continue to literally wander through the wilderness, our fate left to uncoordinated decisions based sometimes on fact and sometimes on emotion, but lacking relevance to the total needs of man, society and nature.

Finally, I would point out that there are obvious benefits for wilderness management in having one department responsible for all Federal land management. We can be assured that there will be consistent management policy for all designated wilderness areas. We can see to it that Federal nonwilderness areas adjacent to designated wilderness are managed appropriately.

A Department of Natural Resources enhances our ability to save the resources we are trying to protect when we establish a wilderness area.

Summary and Predictions

Ladies and gentlemen, at one time human accomplishment was measured almost solely by progress in conquering nature. At one time, a person setting out to make his mark *in the world* was measured by the physical mark he could make *on the world*. Today we must be as concerned with protecting as with conquering nature; we must do our best to make our mark *in the world* without leaving a mark *on the world*.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote:

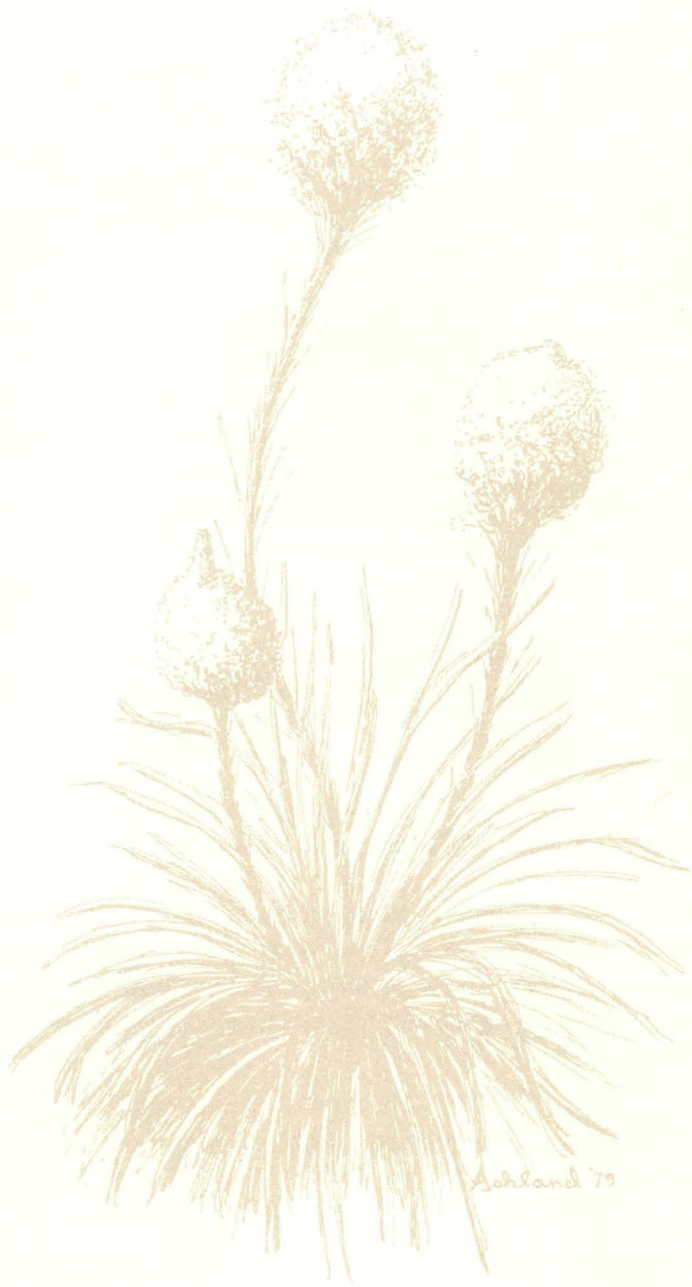
*Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time.*⁴

If I could choose two footprints for my generation to leave on the sands of time, one of them would be a balanced program for the development of needed natural resources and for the protection of irreplaceable scenic and wildlife areas in Alaska. The other footprint would be a logical organization in our Federal government to effectively manage our natural resources—land and sea—during the final two decades of this century and well into the next.

If we take these steps, we will be taking giant strides toward preservation of a rich natural heritage.

If we take these steps, we will be establishing the machinery through which we and those who follow can become better stewards of this land and its many resources.

If we take these steps, I will rest satisfied and confident that we have done our best when that time comes—as it does to each generation—to pass the torch to the next.



Notes

¹ Cahn, Robert. 1978. *Footprints on the Planet: A Search for an Environmental Ethic*. New York: Universe Books.

² Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce. [See Helen Addison Howard and Dan McGrath, *War Chief Joseph* (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Press, 1941), p. 84. In the summer of 1876, a government commission was dispatched to the Wallowa Valley to persuade the Nez Perce to abandon their ancestral lands and move to a reservation. These words constituted part of young Joseph's rejection of the commission's argument.]

³ Roosevelt, Theodore. 1907. From a message to Congress, December 3.

⁴ Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth. 1839. "A Psalm of Life."









The University of Idaho Wilderness Research Center has initiated the Wilderness Resource Distinguished Lecture-ship as an annual event to encourage constructive dialogue and to broaden understanding of the wilderness resource. Speakers are invited on the basis of contributions to the philosophical or scientific rationale of wilderness management.

Other activities of the Wilderness Research Center include promotion of sound methods of protective management; stimulation of interdisciplinary research; support of a graduate student assistantship and of summer research projects for undergraduate students; sponsorship of annual field trips for Wildland Recreation Management students; and other similar wilderness-related activities appropriate to the mission of a land grant university.

Support for the Center or for its specific projects is welcomed in the form of gifts and bequests. For further information, contact

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