



IDAHO CHAPTER
THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

October 23, 1979

Statement on

Proposed Expansion of Snake River

Birds of Prey National Conservation Area

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
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Presented to the Idaho State Land Board, Hall of Mirrors Bldg., Boise, Idaho.

Mr. Gordon C. Trombley, Director
Idaho State Department of Lands
Statehouse - Room 121
Boise, Idaho 83720

Dear Mr. Trombley,

Thank you for the opportunity to present our viewpoint to the gathering. My name is James F. Gore, Chairman of the Environmental Issues Committee, Idaho Chapter of the Wildlife Society. The Idaho Chapter is composed of over 230 professional wildlife specialists in this State. It is in the name of the Idaho Chapter that this statement is presented.

We strongly urge your support for the expansion of the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA) as proposed by the Bureau of Land Management. The Wildlife Society supports the multiple-use approach taken by this proposal. This unique wildlife resource can be so easily conserved while still allowing existing uses of the land, including livestock grazing and recreation.

You have before you a rare opportunity to support an action which will bring national, and even international, recognition to Idaho. The significance of this area far outweighs the benefits to the ~~greedy~~ few which advocate its development. Prime agriculture land is being destroyed every day by more urbanization. Agricultural interests should concentrate their efforts in salvaging those areas, not on such marginal land within the NCA for which irrigation water would have to be pumped from the river at great energy costs.

Furthermore, there can be no compromise in the final size of the NCA. BLM's comprehensive research has shown that the 719,914 acres are the minimum needed to maintain the integrity of the raptor population. Arguments that the birds do not need such an expansive area are ignorant and unfounded.

It is most critical that the focus of the real issue not be obliterated by politics. We sincerely hope that Idaho's officials will be wise enough to let the significance of the area and its multiple-use values guide their decision in this action, and not let the issue deteriorate any further into a political struggle between state and federal powers. It is well known from past experience that the wildlife resource is usually sacrificed in such political trade-offs.

On behalf of the Idaho Chapter of the Wildlife Society, I request that this statement be placed in the hearing record.

Thank-you,

James F. Gore, Chairman
Environmental Issues Committee
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