



Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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New high levels of conservation accomplishment designed to meet the unprecedented and still increasing demands being placed on America's basic natural resources by the Nation's rapid growth were outlined today in the Department of the Interior's annual report entitled "New Horizons in Natural Resource Conservation."

"The conservation crisis of the 1960's," secretary of the Interior Steward L. Udall says in the report, "has resulted neither from ignorance nor folly, but from our very success as a Nation the rush of progress symbolized by our burgeoning cities and thriving industry, and hastened greatly by expanding population."

Highlights of the report include the following:

Parks and Recreation: The president's consistent support of programs to provide adequate recreational facilities to meet our growing needs has been a major factor in outstanding two year record of accomplishments.

Cape Cod in Massachusetts, Point Reyes in California, and Padre Island in Texas have been authorized as new National Seashore Areas as part of a comprehensive program to provide outdoor recreation areas adjacent to metropolitan centers.

Under revised regulations effecting the construction of federally financed reservoirs, sufficient land can now be acquired to preserve the recreational potential of large water impoundments.

A Bureau of Outdoor Recreation has been established in the Department to coordinate Federal Recreation programs stimulate and provide assistance to the States in the development of recreation programs; sponsors and conduct research; encourage interstate and regional cooperative recreation projects; conduct recreation resource surveys; and formulate a national plan on the basis of State, regional and Federal plans.

The president, by Executive order, established a Cabinet level Recreation Advisory Council consisting of Secretaries of the Interior, Agriculture, Defense, Health, Education and Welfare, and the Administrator of the Housing and Home Finance Agency - to facilitate coordinated efforts among the various Federal agencies concerned with outdoor recreation.

Preliminary hearings have paved the way for congressional action on the president's request for establishment of a "pay as you go" land conservation Fund to finance acquisition of lands for conservation and recreation purposes.

Congress authorized use for recreation of facilities at wildlife refuges and fish hatcheries provided it use does not recreation interfere of with facilities at primary conservation wildlife refuges objectives.

Important new legislation will permit the orderly movement of millions of acres of agricultural land not needed to produce food and fibers recreational and other uses.

Water resources: The second session of the 87th Congress authorized the \$171 million Fryingpan - Arkansas project in Colorado and the \$220 million San Juan Chama and Navajo Indian irrigation projects in Colorado and New Mexico the first time in the 60 year history of the Department's Bureau of Reclamation that Congress has approved two water resource projects of this magnitude in single.

The Reclamation program reached its highest level in history with total expenditures of \$347 million for all activities in fiscal year 1962.

Congressional approval was given to Federal participation in the Delaware River Basin development program on a partnership basis with the States of Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania involving a potential billion dollar investment in water conservation projects.

Congressional authorization of a \$75 million expenditure through fiscal years 1962-1967 made possible a considerably accelerated research and development program by the Department's office of the Saline water.

Electric Power: The department has moved forward more rapidly in electric power development including significant innovations until recently considered impractical or impossible than at any other time in many years.

Today in the United States, and throughout the world, we are met at a "new frontier" in electricity. Giant new generators are being built with a capacity of a million or more kilowatts, one of which alone can produce enough power to supply a city the size of Washington D.C.

Work is being accelerated by the Bonneville Power Administration on tests relating to high voltage direct current transmission. Significantly different from any tests previously undertaken in the United States, they will, in fact, provide data not yet available either here or Europe. While direct current transmission is used in Europe, notably in Sweden, most of it is under ground or under water. The Bonneville tests will be performed on insulators and conductors strung on towers in a manner similar to alternating current transmission lines.

Approval was given at the close of the second session of the 87th Congress to construction of world's largest atomic power plant at Hanford, Washington, to utilize steam from the Atomic Energy Commission's new production reactor.

Sport Fisheries and Wild life: It is estimated that one man in every four goes fishing today, one in every five goes hunting, and the percentage is still rising.

With an authorized 7-year advance of \$105 million to acquire land ahead of rising prices, the Department has been enabled to move forward with a greatly accelerated program for the preservation of wildlife as a major recreational resource.

Four new wildlife refuges have been established--in Ohio, Michigan, Mississippi, and Georgia. In all, a total of well over 100,000 acres is scheduled to be added to the Nation's wildlife and waterfowl sanctuaries.

Public Land Resources: An 18 month moratorium on most types of non-mineral locations of public land, ordered in 1961, permitted time to reduce an overwhelming backlog of such applications. To move forward with a long needed inventory, evaluation, and classification of public lands and to review and

revise departmental regulations and initiate legislative proposals necessary to modernize the nations land laws.

The Department has considerably expanded its cooperative efforts with the Department of Agriculture to improve on timber sale practices and achieve a further standardization of forest inventory procedures. As a result, increases of some 175 million board feet in the annual allowable harvest of western Oregon timber lands administered by the Department of the Interior have been made possible.

The Department has submitted to Congress a comprehensive program for modernization of public land laws, establishing new authority to manage and develop the public land's natural resources. The five-year program--with projections to 1980--recommends major expansions of conservation projects on the public land reserve and accelerated efforts to provide recreational facilities; halt soil erosion, and protect forest resources.

For the first time the need to reverse the trend of, deterioration and to build toward full sustained yield production of the 194 million acres of range resources administered by the Department has been placed in perspective as a major national problem. Over 500,000 acres of range lands have received conservation treatment in the form of such projects as brush water, seeding, control structure, stock water developments and fences.

Mineral and Energy Resources: While there are no easy resources in the field of energy, major moves have been taken in recent months with the intent of expanding uses of the Nation's great coal reserves. One of the most significant steps in this direction was taken with establishment in the Department of a new Office of Coal Research, designed to complement the continuing research programs of the Bureau of Mines with the particular aim of achieving break through where possible on a short range, rather than long range basis. The interest stimulated by this action is shown in the fact that, since its establishment, the office has received more than 250 research proposals from private companies, individuals, research organizations, and educational institutions. In fiscal year 1962, contracts with a total value of nearly \$3 million were granted for research in the fields of coal production, utilization, processing, equipment, and transportation.

The first Federal mineral leasing on the Pacific Coast Outer Continental Shelf marked a conservation landmark when some 80,000 acres of submerged lands off the coast of Southern California were offered for competitive oil and gas leasing on the Outer Continental Shelf of Texas and Louisiana--the largest in terms of acreage offered and in the value of revenue earned for the Federal Government.

Fiscal year 1962 applications for minerals exploration assistance increased 175 percent over 1961 following the revision and streamlining of its regulations by the Department's office of Minerals Exploration, including the addition of gold, silver, and iron ore to the eligibility list.

Other Accomplishments: Secretary Udall lists similar advances, assisted by significant increases in appropriations, in Indian Affairs, Territorial, Oceanographic and other scientific programs and concludes:

"The world has undergone mighty changes since the days of the early conservationists. Enormous population gains and swift technological development have combined to create resource pressure which would have been totally inconceivable even a few decades ago.

"In the past it was sufficient to concentrate on resource management, to curb waste and destruction.

Today, while these elements of conservation remain essential, a vital new factor has been added: the need to apply the great discoveries of science to the task of · · · creating new resources and enlarging the use of those existing.

Obviously, a great deal remains to be done in fulfilling our national conservation goals.

“But the progress of the past two years has placed us well on our way toward a record of achievement unmatched since the administration of the two Roosevelts.

“If current momentum is maintained and it appears certain that it will be in the years immediately ahead the nation can feel a new confidence in the adequacy of natural resource supplies to meet the rapidly growing needs, both of today and tomorrow.”

<https://www.bia.gov/as-ia/opa/online-press-release/departments-1962-annual-report-lists-substantial-conservation-gains>