

CONSERVATION NEWS AND NOTES

WALTER ELWOOD, *Chairman, Conservation Committee.*

There can be no peace of mind for those of us with conservation consciences — even though our State legislature wound up its business weeks ago. Too many threatening moves and trouble spots are still flourishing all along our national conservation front. The call for eternal vigilance on our part never lets up.

With Congress so preoccupied by interminable investigation and political maneuvering and, incidentally, by the National Defense program, we are left with no choice but to do our best in behalf of the conservation issues for which we are battling — and be as patient as possible. Of the 6,000 bills introduced into both houses up to April 30, including several hundred "private bills" which do not become public laws; only 25 had been enacted into law, an example of the current slow motion.

With all the hearings going on in Washington, it is nice to know that there will be one on the Lantaff bill appropriating \$100,000 to establish a refuge for the few surviving Key deer of Florida. The original hearing was postponed.

The bill for the protection of the Bald Eagle in Alaska (H.R. 5507) remains in a coma.

Secretary of the Interior Chapman approved the early construction of Echo Park Dam in Dinosaur National Monument. The Reclamation Engineers refuse to consider alternate locations outside of the Monument. This Dam will cost a mere \$165,400,000 — but it will be the third highest dam in the world. Think of that! Whether the money for this has yet been appropriated is an unknown factor. Eliminating the project offers a good opportunity to cut down on our much-criticized government spending.

This Monument is not the only one endangered by colossal and super-colossal dams. At this time all of these National Parks — Grand Canyon, Kings Canyon, Yellowstone, Glacier and Mammoth Cave — and the Grand Canyon National Monument are seriously threatened by the vast plans of the Bureau of Reclamation and the Corps of Army Engineers which discount all values outside of power, irrigation, flood control and navigation.

The small stand of sugar pines, the most remarkable stand of these trees in the world, in the South Calaveras Grove in Tuolumne County, California, still remains in the clutches of a lumber company despite the tireless efforts of the California War Memorial Park Association and of the thousands who supported the Association in its battle. The sacred cow of big business is sure sacred.

The need for control of water on the land where it falls, instead of simply building great levees and dams, and the effects of overgrazing and extensive logging on our watersheds, are, after long neglect at last fully recognized in the Report of the President's Water Resources Commission.

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22,000 significant sources of water pollution in the United States almost equally divided between municipalities and industries, have been listed. Even with 9300 treatment plants cutting down this pollution, harmful waste still pouring into our streams equals the sewage from over 150,000,000 people.

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The Johnson-Thompson bill was passed, increasing the price of duck stamps from \$1.00 to \$2.00. This bill also allows hunting on any newly-acquired refuges when waterfowl, in the judgment of the Fish and Wildlife Service, are not decreasing.

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The American National Live Stock Association is straining every muscle to secure for its members more grazing privileges and special concessions, not only on western grazing lands but in the U. S. Forest Preserves as well. Its nation-wide program of action aims to counteract the groups now advocating conservation, charging them with being "mostly idealists and impractical, book-trained conservationists." The initiative in conservation, the Association says, must be taken over by practical groups, the Live Stock bunch, in particular. And, on all of their publicity and stationery, they propose to blazon the slogan "Conservation for Freedom!" or "Conservation for Defense!"

See the story of their plan in "Conservation News", Vol. 16, No. 1, Feb. 1, 1951, published by the National Wildlife Federation.

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The United States has 282 wildlife refuges, 262 of which are in the States themselves. Of these 196 are primarily for waterfowl, with about 100 each having 5000 acres or more.

Last year 15½ million fishing licenses were bought by hopeful souls, a number growing larger every year, with no corresponding increase in trout streams.

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Conservation is a big and far-reaching problem in the big country of which we have the good fortune to be citizens. The more we are awake to this problem, wherever it appears, in our home town or in our nation, the better citizens we are bound to be.



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