

Land & Water Law Review

Volume 6
Issue 1 *Symposium: An Analysis of the Public
Land Law Review Commission Report*

Article 28

1970

Discussion: Recreation, Fish, and Wildlife

Symposium

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Recommended Citation

Symposium (1970) "Discussion: Recreation, Fish, and Wildlife," *Land & Water Law Review*. Vol. 6 : Iss. 1 , pp. 311 - 318.

Available at: https://scholarship.law.uwyo.edu/land_water/vol6/iss1/28

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VOLUME VI

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DISCUSSION: RECREATION, FISH, AND WILDLIFE

Problem in the consensus nature of the Report.

Need for a natural environmental resources inventory analysis.

**State versus Federal control and planning of
recreational areas on the public lands.**

MR. BALDWIN: I think in a general way we can make some points in clarifying the Commission's ambiguities and make comments which would be helpful in legislation. Some of the points which struck me were the uncertainty of investment, the uncertainty of regulation, the inactivity of Congress, and to some extent the ways which agencies may have extended their jurisdiction. These frequently have been the cause of environmental protection. When we start talking about the uncertainties of investment and the uncertainties of expectation, we are in danger of getting into situations which will degrade the environment if they were clear. Anything which discourages development protects the environment. Now we are at a stage of sophistication where we must constantly manage our resources, a stage at which conservationists look with some trepidation. We are not accustomed to Congress acting positively in every case to protect the environment. We have relied on uncertainties with which businessmen relied with reluctance. Now we have to take positive conscious action. This is something which conservationists are not capable of doing easily within Congress. Now, if we can clarify the conflicts we will be doing much more than most meetings accomplish. In my experience there are two very dull kinds of meetings, one in which there are all environmentalists and the other all industrialists. Here we have a mixture in a deliberate attempt to clarify the conflicts. The problem with the Commission's *Report* is in the consensus.

There is no consistent theory throughout the *Report*, with which the various members might have agreed. Points where one member might have said "I disagree," I might have said "I agree." We have to discover what the consensus was. While the consensus method has resulted in a report it has at times lost all of us.

MR. JOHNSON: (*supplemental remarks to the presentation of his paper*) I cannot make any generalized statement whether the *Report* is either good or bad. It is both good and bad. I come up with very mixed feelings about it. What I am trying to do here is say something about the Commission's position on recreation, how it will affect the public of this country and the way it reacts on the major decisions of future importance. I don't think that the Commission really came to grips with that. I think the consensus nature of its *Report* made it very difficult to do so. I thought there was either a great deal of tension on the Commission or a great deal of tension between the Commission and the public on the questions of recreation, fish and wildlife. It resulted in a less analytically consistent kind of statement than might be found in some other areas.

MR. HANSEN: I cannot help but go back to sentence 1, page 1 of the *Report*. I think that this sets a tone for the discussion of environment and recreation. It demonstrates concern for recreation and environment because it reflects an underlying attitude.

Feeling the pressures of an enlarging population, burgeoning growth, and expanding demand for land and natural resources, the American people today have an almost desperate need to determine the best purposes to which their public lands and the wealth and opportunities of those lands should be dedicated.

This departs from a goal setting or a creative role for the Commission, it is stepping out in front of the pack and reflecting the inevitability of our doom, so to speak.

Also on page 1 is an emotional statement on recreation which seems to be inconsistent with a lot of other things in the *Report*.

Based on our study, however, we find that, generally, areas set aside by executive action as national forests, national monuments, and for other purposes have not had adequate study and there has not been proper consultation with people affected or with the units of local government in the vicinity, particularly as to precise boundaries.

Then in talking about the Classification Multiple Use Act and the Bureau of Land Management stepping forward under that act, the *Report* said "we believe that in many cases there was hasty action based on preconceived determinations instead of being based on careful land use planning." Now these are the type of fighting words that concern the environmentalist. The environmentalists fell this type of language refers to hasty action in environmental control and recreation opportunity. I do not want to be unfair about it; however, I have been puzzled ever since I read that on page one.

Responding to the recreational aspect of the *Report*, I have a feeling there is a propensity on the part of the Commission to get the federal government out of the recreational business except as to those areas of national significance which are hard to define. However, there are a lot of exceptions to this which are pointed out in the chapter.

I cannot help but notice the intensity of maximizing commercial mass recreation with even less emphasis on qualitative recreation experience.

There is a tendency to apply to the recreation dimension the same social value system which we apply to other uses of the public lands, for example: more production, more recreation user days, more mass opportunity.

I think that on page 197 of the *Report* the policy framework which the Commission sets forth should be looked at again and again as a key to what the Commission is saying here and in other chapters relating to outdoor recreation. The federal government should be responsible for sites of national significance. For example, it is possible that the open space that we have here in the West is such a rare commodity for all the nation that it ought to be preserved. It could be con-

sidered to be of national significance. I am just presenting this as a type of thing that should be considered. I am not saying that it is true.

The idea that the states should play the basic role in making recreational areas available needs to be examined. It should be observed that the states have not done an outstanding job in most of the parks in this country. I concede that there are some outstanding state plans and parks, but they are the exception and not the rule. As far as local governments are concerned, I think the provincial western attitude must be considered. I think the unified attitude of county commissioners in the Rocky Mountain region is almost monolithic. When it comes to the acquisition of more land for recreational purposes, they feel an over abundance of land has already been acquired.

Consider the *Report's* conclusion that individual initiative and private enterprise should continue to be the most important force in outdoor recreation. I don't know by what data we could draw the conclusion that individual initiative and private enterprise have been the most important force in outdoor recreation. I'm not suggesting, however, that private enterprise should not have a greater role in the future.

Recommendation 78 which states that an immediate effort should be undertaken to identify and protect areas of national significance on the public lands is a very worthy recommendation. The idea of a comprehensive inventory is an excellent one. I feel strongly that we should have a national environmental resources inventory analysis. It should be similar to those in Wisconsin and in some areas of Pennsylvania. We really do not know what values are available to us.

It is interesting and laudatory that the Commission recognized wilderness. This is one of the first times that it has been recognized that areas of wilderness not normally reviewed under the Wilderness Act at present should be inventoried and identified as soon as possible. This is a step in the right direction.

Recommendation 79 says that recreation policies and programs on public lands of less than national significance should be designed to meet the needs identified by statewide recreation plans. There are many nationally significant areas that also serve state needs. There are some federal lands east of the Rocky Mountain area which may not be nationally significant but are highly significant from the standpoint of states in that area. They serve a very critical state purpose.

I agree with the Commission's recommendation that intensive recreational needs be served by the state and local governments. Again there are exceptions which the Commission points out. One particular problem and the only one that Ralph Johnson did not discuss in detail is the problem of transferring federal lands to state and local governments, whether conveying them by lease, purchase or whatever. I think of the example involved in Maricopa County in Arizona because I was involved in making the park system plan for that area some years ago. The county had acquired from the Bureau of Land Management some 100,000 acres of land which could have been the most outstanding park system in the nation. At that time it was probably the most comprehensive metropolitan area recreation plan anywhere in the nation. That plan has yet to be implemented. All these great intentions were caught in a quagmire of political maneuvers. Unfortunately this type of thing will continue unless there is some condition imposed on these leases. It is suggested that the reversionary provisions are provided, but I think we need more. We need provisions which will insure adequate state and local government performance within a reasonable period of time. The concept of reversionary provisions, if we had them limited to 25 years could have adverse results because they would allow the states to nibble away at the land. The states could initially acquire the land for recreational purposes, use it though it was really unsatisfactory for that purpose, and then after the 25 years had expired, use the land for an airport, shopping sub-division, or some other purpose.

The *Report* said that on federal recreation management lands not classified as nationally significant emphasis should

be placed on diverse types of outdoor recreation requiring minimal land development and supervision. This would certainly appeal to a lot of people who like back country experiences, but a problem is created when the *Report* suggests that most of this type of development is consistent and compatible with all of the other uses of federal lands and that this type of development can be integrated with the management for multiple use. If most of this non-intensified development would have to be done on a multiple use scale we know from experience that recreation will come out last.

The recommendation that the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation be given more power and status is certainly necessary. One of the problems we have consistently experienced is that the B.O.R. must try to coordinate probably 90 different recreation programs scattered through innumerable departmental agencies, bureaus, commissions, and special committees.

The discussion of the need for a fair and equitable rationing system is certainly a laudatory example of facing realities. Recognizing that we can destroy our great recreational areas by overuse has been overlooked for a long time. It was not recognized by our recreational management agencies.

I was disturbed about Recommendation 84 which provides that private enterprise should be encouraged to play a greater role in the development and management of intensive recreation use areas on public lands not designated for concessioner development. I am not inheritantly opposed to a bigger role by private enterprise. For that matter, I would like to enlarge the role of private enterprise, but I am concerned that attention should be given to more than just construction standards. The construction standards should be set to insure that the facilities are adequate. The recommendation leaves out a qualitative design dimension and could be equated with what I would call "honky tonk" proposals. I am sure that was not intended by the Commission.

After saying all the things it did in this chapter, the Commission took a very interesting position. Recommendation 85 says that Congress should provide guidelines for de-

velopment and management of the public land resources for outdoor development and recreation. The Commission abdicated its responsibility of playing a creative role. In other words, the Commission said it had made all the previous recommendations and anything further was up to Congress; the Commission said that it left a great deal of additional work to be done in developing better working standards for this purpose. Of course, I would have to say amen to this. The capstone of the matter was the Recommendation that the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation be required to develop and submit to Congress within two years standards for evaluation and investment in outdoor recreation development on public lands. The Commission said this is really the responsibility of Congress and Congress should require the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation to prepare and submit standards for evaluation.

I would like to make one final comment about the discussion of wilderness. It is noted that there have been disputes of whether wildness alone constitutes qualification for wilderness, regardless of whether the area has other potential uses. Wouldn't it be better to require that an area not be wild but rather that it be unique? The Commission says that this would be a better standard. It must have wildness and uniqueness. However, the Wilderness Act of 1964 says nothing about uniqueness. The Act has no requirement of uniqueness. Aside from that, the Act says that wilderness has many other multiple uses besides outdoor recreation. We are talking about at the very most 6 per cent (a very high estimate) of wild lands on these 750,000,000 acres, and once wildness is lost it can never be restored. The fact that it is wild, I contend, makes it unique. Earlier in the *Report* the Commission said that uniqueness is too subjective; it is impossible to make standards for uniqueness. Here the Commission comes back in the case of wilderness and says it must be unique to qualify. This disturbs me considerably.

Finally the Commission said that factors deserving consideration in federal recreation investment should include: expected use rates, investment and administrative costs per unit of expected use, expected net impact on regional econo-

mies, the forfeited opportunity cost of other uses of the land, impact on the environment and comparisons with alternative development. These are all primarily economic criteria for recreation resources, reflecting the type of concern I referred to earlier. They do not deal with quality experiences.

Despite all of its weaknesses the *Report* is a step forward. It should not be considered only in a negative or critical fashion.