

WILDERNESS RESOURCE

DISTINGUISHED LECTURESHIP

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*WILDERNESS
IN A BALANCED
LAND USE
FRAMEWORK*

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Dean's Introduction

Frank Church is a native Idahoan, raised in Boise, and the son of pioneer stock. After decorated military service in World War II, he attended Stanford University Law School, graduating with honors. He practiced law in Boise until 1956, when, at the age of 32, he was elected to the U. S. Senate; he was re-elected in 1962, 1968, and 1974. Today, Frank Church is truly a distinguished national leader in the affairs of this country.

Senator Church is widely known and acclaimed for many things: his work in international affairs; his leadership in opposition to the war in Vietnam and to concentration of power in the presidency; his pursuit of governmental reform through re-establishment of constitutional principles and open government at all levels; his untiring efforts for the elderly, as chairman of the Senate Committee on Aging; his strong stands against undue Federal regulation and impacts on American life, be it gun control or taxes inflated by lack of economy in government.

But it is not these accomplishments that bring Senator Church to us tonight as the first speaker in the University of Idaho's Wilderness Resource Distinguished Lectureship series. It is his equally impressive national

that it's in their best interests to see multiple use management improved. The ultimate size of the wilderness system may well depend on increasing production levels from our other lands.

I'm reminded here that, back in the early 70s following debates on the proposed Timber Supply Act, an ad hoc committee of conservationists and lumber industry representatives was convened by the American Forestry Association. Its purpose was to identify "areas of agreement." The concept is a good one because it puts diverse groups to work, side by side, searching for consensus on matters they do agree upon. And, in addition, by helping build a common effort to get more from our forests — both wood and wilderness — it helps reduce the polarization that so often bogs us down in resource matters.

So, as I work for wilderness, I work also for more efficient forest management across the board.⁷ I urge sportsmen, conservationists, and environmentalists to help. Because the only way we can fashion an adequate wilderness system is as part of a well-balanced resource management program for the entire country.

The Purity Issue

My final comments tonight concern the issue of wilderness purity. Time after time, when we discuss wilderness, questions are raised about how developed an area can be and still qualify as wilderness, or what kinds of activities within a wilderness area are consistent with the purposes of the Wilderness Act. I believe, and many citizens agree with me, that the agencies are applying provisions of the Wilderness Act too strictly and thus misconstruing the intent of Congress as to how these areas should be managed.

One of my long-time friends, Ted Trueblood, challenged the purity doctrine of the Forest Service in the September 1975 issue of *Field & Stream*.⁸ As Ted put it, the Forest Service with its purist doctrine is trying to scuttle the Wilderness Act. In arguing the case, Ted refers to requirements which make outfitter operations difficult, to fish and wildlife management activities which limit the enjoyment of hunters and fishermen, to the exclusion of deserving Idaho areas from wilderness classification because they contain minor evidence of man's prior activities, and perhaps most tragic of all, to the burning of historic cabins to eliminate the evidence of earlier human habitation.

Such policies are misguided. If Congress had intended that wilderness be administered in so stringent a manner, we would never have written the law as we did. We wouldn't have provided for the possibility of insect, disease and fire control. We wouldn't have allowed private inholdings to remain. We wouldn't have excluded condemnation as the means for forcibly acquiring developed ranches within wilderness areas — a practice allowed on ordinary national forest lands from which wilderness is created. We wouldn't have made wilderness classification subject to existing private rights such as mining and grazing. We wouldn't have provided for the continuation of nonconforming uses where they were established — including the use of motor boats in part of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area and the use of airfields in the primitive areas here in Idaho. As these examples clearly demonstrate, it was *not* the intent of Congress that wilderness be administered in so pure a fashion as to needlessly restrict its customary public use and enjoyment. Quite the contrary, Congress fully intended that wilderness should be managed to allow its use by a wide spectrum of Americans.

There is need for a rule of reason in interpreting the act, of course, because wilderness values are to be protected. As I stated in 1972 while chairing a hearing of the Subcommittee on Public Lands:

... The Wilderness Act was not deliberately contrived to hamstring reasonable and necessary management activities. We intend to permit the managing agencies... latitude... where the purpose is to protect the wilderness, its resources and the public visitors within the area... [including, for example] minimum sanitation facilities... fire protection necessities... [and] the development of potable water supplies. ... The issue is not whether necessary management facilities are prohibited; they are not. The test is whether they are necessary.⁹

Thus, the wilderness management framework intended by Congress was that the agencies do only what is *necessary*. The facilities just mentioned may be required — and restrictions on use may sometimes be needed to protect especially fragile locations. But in adopting regulations, common sense is required. For example, I can understand the Forest Service urging outfitters and guides to make their camps conform to the spirit of a wilderness experience for their clients; but it seems insane to allow wooden tent floors in their camps, only to require them to be packed out of the area each fall before they disappear below the snow and then carried back in again after the spring thaw!