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★ news release

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GREATEST DECADE IN CONSERVATION HISTORY PREDICTED BY UDALL

President Kennedy's program to link America's expanding economy with an equally dynamic program of conservation will emerge as "but one highlight of the greatest decade in the conservation history of the United States," Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall predicted in Denver, Friday, March 9.

Speaking before delegates to the 26th annual convention of the National Wildlife Federation, Secretary Udall reviewed Congressional action that has spurred "a coordinated effort by all to assure water, power, timber, minerals, forage, productive soil, and an inspiring natural environment for generations to come."

Secretary Udall provided for the first time an outline of what he considers priority items before Congress, passage of which he said "can make the 60's an "Age of Action". These included passage of legislation that would:

1. Provide a sound wilderness bill, free of crippling amendments.
2. Create a Youth Conservation Corps.
3. Launch a shoreline study and help States acquire needed areas.
4. Provide a Water Resources Planning Act.
5. Preserve the Tulelake-Klamath Refuge in Oregon and California, and another bill to protect wetlands in federally-assisted drainage programs.
6. Create new national parks, monuments or seashore areas at Point Reyes (Calif.); Great Basin (Nev.); Sleeping Bear Dunes (Mich.); Ozark Rivers (Mo.); Prairie Lands (Kans.); Lakeshore Dunes (Ind.); and the Sagamore Hill National Historic Site in New York.

He urged equally strong support of legislation to include planning for outdoor recreation in Bureau of Reclamation water projects; lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, and where compatible, on National Wildlife Refuges; provide States with the new opportunities to obtain surplus lands for park and recreation purposes, and passage of the Administration farm bill that would encourage recreation and fish and wildlife use of land not needed for agricultural production.

"This list of unfinished and new business, if enacted into law by the Congress," Secretary Udall said, "can make 1962 far and away the finest year of accomplishment in conservation history."

Additional steps, such as implementation of President Kennedy's recommendation for establishment of an Outdoor Recreation Advisory Council and the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation will provide a means "where recreation, and fish and wildlife interests will be given a seat at the head table of the Federal Government," he said.

He praised the manner in which States are responding dramatically to the challenge to assume a greater burden in the outdoor recreation and preservation assignment, and stressed need for increasing State level responsibilities.

"The days when a courageous President could win great conservation victories by the stroke of a pen are over," he said. "The pressures of a growing industrial society press heavily on our resources; competition for land and water increases; hard choices and vast public and private expenditures are now the instruments of conservation progress," Secretary Udall told the conservation session.

He concluded by urging support of President Kennedy's "pay as you go" proposals for financing an eight year program of park expansion, including State aid, acquisition of wildlife refuges and rounding out the National Forest Service System, through a Land Conservation Fund, supported in part by user fee car stickers.

"Congressional and public approval of this fund would provide a means of accomplishing the one objective on which the future of outdoor recreation opportunity depends: acquiring, ahead of the bulldozer and the dragline and in advance of skyrocketing prices the remaining areas, grand and modest in scale, which will serve the outdoor recreation needs of the future," he said.

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