

WATER FOR THE WEST
485 National Press Building
Washington, D. C. 20004
628-3709

An Information Service Concerned With Programs For the Most Enlightened Conservation of a Great Natural Resource.

Contact: Joe Phelan or Morley Fox

February, 1966

Editorial Memorandum

We are sending you, and a great many newspaper editorial writers across the Nation, a reprint of the Saturday Evening Post article, "Let's Spoil the Wilderness," by Robert Wernick.

We are doing so in the very firm belief that most of the country's editors and editorial writers subscribe to the ancient and still sound theory that there are two sides to every story.

For quite some time now, the American public has heard only the shrill voice of opposition whenever any new multi-purpose development on the Colorado River is proposed. They have heard some organizations, which carry the banner of "conservation" precariously, trumpet catchy slogans about "drowning out the Grand Canyon" without providing any explanation, much less proof positive. It is a tribute to the propagandizing efforts of these groups that a housewife in Bangor, Me., will remember such phrases without really knowing what it is that allegedly threatens the Canyon.

Well, we are appealing now for the opportunity to acquaint Americans everywhere with all the facts. We are appealing to journalism's historic reputation for fairness, impartiality and objectivity -- and natural curiosity -- to at least hear out the other side of the story.

Therefore, we are enclosing a reprint from the Congressional Record in which Rep. Morris K. Udall (D-Ariz.) discusses the issues and answers, quite adequately we believe, all the important questions concerning the Lower Colorado River Basin Project. And the basic thinking of its proponents is the point which Mr. Wernick makes in his fine essay -- that those who espouse the cause

of progress in the broadest public interest not only have equal rights and privileges in determining this nation's future, but ought not be slandered as Philistines because their views do not coincide with those of the minority.

As author Wernick points out, "a man who has been infected with the wilderness lust is not satisfied with one stretch of forest, or one uncluttered mountainside. He wants hundreds of square miles of thicket and coulee and beaver dam and white water; and he wants them all for himself."

The overriding virtue of the Lower Colorado River Basin Project is that it offers a wide range of benefits for the greatest public good. It holds out the promise of a pleasant environment AND orderly resource development. Nevada's Lake Mead is a good example, and you may be interested in knowing that nearly 3.5 million persons visited the Lake Mead National Recreation Area last year and more than 500,000 individuals toured Hoover Dam, which forms that popular lake.

The preservationists, on the other hand, offer only the narrowest possible choice -- a private domain of the wilderness, or nothing.

Americans should not have to choose between material progress and an agreeable environment. We must have both, and the Lower Colorado River Basin Project will provide both.

If you have any questions about the project, or if you need any additional information, please let us know.
