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SENATE

REPORT  
No. 91-594

### HART MOUNTAIN NATIONAL ANTELOPE REFUGE, ETC.

DECEMBER 9, 1969.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. JACKSON, from the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,  
submitted the following

### REPORT

[To accompany S. 3014]

The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, to which was referred the bill (S. 3014) to designate certain lands in the Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge, the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, the Three Arch Rocks and Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuges, all in Oregon; the Bering Sea, Bogoslof, Tuxedni, St. Lazaria, Hazy Islands, and Forrester Island National Wildlife Refuges, all in Alaska; the Copalis, Flattery Rocks and Quillayute Needles National Wildlife Refuges in the State of Washington, and the Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico, as wilderness, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with amendments and recommends that the bill as amended do pass.

#### PURPOSE

This bill, S. 3014, as introduced would have designated as units of the National Wilderness Preservation System, the Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge, the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, the Three Arch Rocks and Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuges, all in Oregon; the Bering Sea, Bogoslof, Tuxedni, St. Lazaria, Hazy Islands, and Forrester Island National Wildlife Refuges, all in Alaska; the Copalis, Flattery Rocks and Quillayute Needles National Wildlife Refuges in the State of Washington, and the Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico. All of the lands are presently within the National Wildlife Refuge System, and no land acquisition costs are involved. These wilderness proposals were sent to the Congress by the President in his message of January 23, 1969.

## DESCRIPTION

The proposed Three Arch Rocks Wilderness area is located in Tillamook County near Oceanside, Oreg.

The area consists of 17 acres and was established as a wildlife refuge for sea birds, murre, cormorants, gulls, petrels, puffins and a few sea lions. Public use of the area is nil because of inaccessibility.

The Oregon Islands Wilderness proposal consists of 21 acres located in Curry County near Brookings, Oreg. The entire island which is proposed for wilderness classification was originally established as a bird sanctuary for the Leach's petrel. With the exception of occasional scientific expeditions to the island, there is virtually no public use.

The proposed Bering Sea Wilderness contains 41,113 acres which encompasses the total acreage of Bering Sea National Wildlife Refuge. It is located 220 miles west of the Alaskan mainland and 250 miles east of the Asiatic coast. The area, which receives very little public use because of its isolation, was originally established to protect the breeding grounds of several species of native birds.

The Bogoslof Wilderness proposal contains 390 acres and is located in the Bogoslof National Wildlife Refuge. It is located 25 miles north of Umnak Island in the Aleutian Chain. The area, which receives very limited human visitation because of its isolation and poor weather conditions, was established as a sanctuary for sea birds.

The proposed Tuxedni Wilderness contains 6,402 acres and is a part of the Tuxedni National Wildlife Refuge. The area is located in Cook Inlet 60 miles southwest of Kenai, Alaska and receives very little public use because of its isolation and dense vegetation.

The St. Lazaria Wilderness proposal consists of an entire island of 62 acres. The area is located near the entrance to Sitka Sound, 15 miles southwest of Sitka, Alaska. The area is infrequently visited by humans, and it has as its chief utility the use by sea birds.

The proposed Hazy Island Wilderness consists of a 42 acre island which is 45 miles south of Sitka, Alaska. There is no public use of this island which serves as a breeding ground for native sea birds.

The last Alaskan area proposed for wilderness classification is Forrester Island located approximately 80 miles southwest of Ketchikan. The entire 2,630 acre island is included in the proposal. The area was established to protect sea birds and other birds and receive no public use.

The Washington Islands Wilderness proposal covers three different refuges, the Copalis National Wildlife refuge, the Flattery Rocks National Refuge and the Quillayute National Wildlife Refuge. The proposal covers 247 acres and includes almost all offshore rocks and islands in a 100-mile stretch of Pacific Ocean off Clallam, Jefferson and Grays Harbor Counties, Wash. Altogether there are about 40 named islands and several hundred unnamed rocks, reefs and spires which range in size from less than 1 to 20 acres. The islands are extremely important as nesting areas for sea birds.

The proposed Salt Creek Wilderness area is located within the Bitter Lake National Wildlife refuge in New Mexico approximately 150 miles northeast of Roswell. The proposal consists of 8,500 acres in the undeveloped north unit of the refuge. The refuge was established primarily for waterfowl, although very few waterfowl use the north unit.

## HEARINGS

In accordance with the requirements of the Wilderness Act of September 3, 1964 (78 Stat. 890), public hearings were held at locations convenient to the areas affected. The results of these hearings are summarized in the synopsis accompanying the recommendations to the President, which follow later.

## AMENDMENTS

The committee amended S. 3014 by striking subsection 1(a)(1) and 1(a)(5). These subsections included the Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge Wilderness and the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge Wilderness. Both areas were recommended for wilderness classification in the "message from the President of the United States" in transmitting "The fifth annual report on the status of the National Wilderness Preservation System", dated January 23, 1969.

Opposition to the Malheur wilderness proposal arose from the Oregon Game Commission which indicated that if the area were declared wilderness it would inhibit future wildlife management. At the public hearing on the proposal, held in Burns, Oreg. on May 2, 1967, concern was expressed that economic harm to Harney County might arise if the area was established as a wilderness area. These views, together with a classification of certain points by the Department of the Interior are summarized in the enclosed synopsis of the proposal.

At the Lakeview, Oregon hearings on April 21, 1967, the Oregon State Land Board offered no objection to the Hart Mountain Wilderness Proposal. Opposition was received, however, from representatives of organizations from Lake County, Oreg. The main concern was the continued multiple use for livestock, because Lakeview and Lake County are heavily dependent upon the livestock industry. A more elaborate explanation of points of opposition are summarized in the enclosed synopsis of the proposal.

During the Interior Committee hearings held on the Hart Mountain wilderness proposal, testimony was presented which indicated that overgrazing of this area altered the vegetative ecology from grasses to sagebrush. Because of the alteration of the environment, and a desire to reclaim the land to its former productive status, some question was raised as to whether the area fulfilled the definition of the wilderness. The Oregon Game Commission is desirous of combating the sagebrush which is diminishing to food supply for certain animals, but they would be prohibited from doing this if the area was classified wilderness.

Additional concern was expressed that if the area were declared wilderness the private inholdings within the wilderness boundaries might be removed from the tax rolls. No private land, however, can be condemned within the boundaries of a wilderness area without an act of Congress. Questions were also raised about the potential problem of providing access to inholdings which are enclosed within a wilderness area and which could conceivably be developed to the detriment of the surrounding wilderness.

Because of the questions raised regarding inclusion of these areas into the wilderness system, the committee adopted an amendment to exclude these lands at this time. The committee recommends that the other areas contained in S. 3014 be given wilderness status immediately.