REMARKS OF UNDER SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR JOHN A. CARVER, JR.,
AT THE GOVERNOR'S THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON TOURISM, RECREATION
AND CONVENTIONS, IN ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, APRIL 6, 1966

This is a repeat performance. I spoke to your
conference a year ago, and I remember the occasion
with pleasure. You listened with gratifying attention to
my prepared remarks, but you also asked specific questions
about New Mexico's relations with the Federal Government
in the field of recreation.

You wanted to know about the then-new system of
user charges which we called the "land and water
conservation fund sticker", and you asked about what
the allocations from the new fund could be used for.
You had some questions about coordination.

Governor Campbell's leadership and the effective
work of John Flynn caused New Mexico to be in the first
group of States to have its State plan approved by the
Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, but I think I might well
take last year's hint and give you some details.

But before looking at our current situation, let me try to put some perspective in the Federal Government's relationships with New Mexico and the States generally. In 1958, when Senator Clinton Anderson's bill to create the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission was passed, the national program for outdoor recreation was a conglomerate. The National Parks were a keystone; so were the National Forests, with campgrounds, the beginnings of a wilderness administration, and a concern about the recreation use of forest access roads. The Bureau of Reclamation and the Corps of Engineers were aware of the burgeoning interest in water-based recreation, but they were still entering into contracts which required most development work to be undertaken by local units of government. The National Wildlife Refuges were well established, but
they were not widely thought of as recreation resources. Recreation was an activity on public lands, but was largely ignored as a program objective except by some visionaries. And so it went. Under the Chairmanship of Laurance Rockefeller and with the active participation of its principal Senatorial sponsor, Senator Anderson of this State, the monumental report, Outdoor Recreation for America, was issued in 1962, and a truly national approach to recreation began.

Its recommendations carried great weight. They were practical and realistic. One of them called for a Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, to coordinate the efforts of 20 Federal agencies concerned with outdoor recreation, and it is a source of great pride in our Department that Stewart Udall, Secretary of the Interior, responded immediately to that recommendation, creating such a bureau by Secretarial order.
But we were dealing with a movement. Fast as we worked, we could not stay ahead. By the time another recommendation was carried out, and the Land and Water Conservation Fund concept was accepted in order to provide substantial financing for outdoor recreation, both at the national and the local level, the march of events almost obscured it.

In 1960, the multiple use act for the Forest Service had specified recreation as one of the objectives of that great organization, and planning for recreation opportunities in the eastern United States forests had proceeded apace.

The Bureau of Land Management's charter was similarly changed, although not until 1964. Appropriations had been accelerated, and recreation potential of flood control and reclamation reservoirs was considered in the planning phases with the same care as the engineering aspects of the project.
Recreation had come to be recognized by the Department of Agriculture as an economic opportunity in the use of land retired from cropping, and loans were being made for these purposes.

The most striking development was the acceptance by the Congress of an affirmative obligation to furnish outdoor recreation opportunities in the crowded eastern parts of the United States. Cape Cod National Seashore signaled this change, as for the first time a major unit of the National Park System was set up without either public lands or a contribution of private lands as the essential nucleus.

The Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (Tocks Island) will furnish recreational opportunities of unmatched quality to millions of Americans in the crowded cities of the eastern seaboard.

Not just the Federal Government, but the States
and local units of government and the private sector have been caught up in this movement. Highway departments in States like New Mexico have always had a lead, and largely unappreciated, role in this--it is now being recognized.

It is quite impossible for me to relate this dynamic phenomenon of our time to New Mexico in any broad way. But I think we can examine the workings of the land and water conservation fund idea in this State as indicative of how this pattern of Federal-State cooperation for meeting the recreation needs of America is working out.

I've already said that New Mexico was in the earliest group of States to qualify. New Mexico's benefit from the generosity of Congress in appropriating from the fund in fiscal 1965 and fiscal 1966 a total of $94 million for State grants has started with $120 thousand
plus apportioned to it in fiscal 1965, and just short of a million dollars in 1966.

New Mexico submitted 34 projects to cost over a million dollars. Three of these have been approved and funded, the lion's share for the vital and much needed work of development. Development at Bottomless Lakes State Park is the kind that serves people—a swimming and wading pool and bathhouse.

New Mexico has promised to allot 60 percent of the money it gets to locally sponsored projects, from tot lots to city parks.

Fourteen approved projects include play areas and neighborhood parks in Santa Fe, and day use and active sports projects in Farmington, Estonia, Grady, Hobbs, Riveroso, and Albuquerque. A Rio Grande River Parkway Development is part of a master plan which calls for a river parkway through the heart of the City of
Albuquerque.

An active useful partnership between the Federal Government envisioned by the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission is now in effect.

New Mexico's recreation plan listed objectives in an order with which the Federal Government would heartily agree.

1. Space and facilities for outdoor recreation in, around and beyond the urban areas.

2. Access by the public to recreation waters.

3. Acquisition to preserve areas of natural beauty, and to make them available for enjoyment by everyone.

4. Preservation of historic sites and structures.

5. Fish and game and wildlife propagation and habitat for people interested in this form of recreation.

If the long-term national objective in recreation
is to provide, maintain, and make as equally accessible as possible to most of the American people a well-balanced system of recreational resources of adequate quantity and good quality, we must grapple with several relationships.

One of these is the relative role of the public and the private sectors in the furnishing of recreation. The private sector now provides more than half the total effort in outdoor recreation. Of the remaining half, in the public sector, no good statistics are available but it seems clear that the major fraction is by State and local governments.

Yet there is great unevenness, and no one is better able to appreciate this than New Mexicans. You probably have the greatest supply of recreation opportunities of any State. From the private sectoral standpoint, your customers come from the whole United States
and most of the economic benefit from recreation is in the tourist-services business.

We need to know much more about the relationship of the public and private sectors of the recreation business. Some of the questions for which we need answers are economic. For example, do we adequately understand the impact which user fees at federally operated or federally financed recreation areas have on State or private recreation facilities that may be nearby or may be competitive alternatives? Does free camping at many National Park areas prevent needed private expansion of camping areas? What is the case in other kinds of recreation areas and facilities? Are there some types of recreation better suited to development for profit than others? Some seem to be, but for the present we have very great difficulty being specific about it and designing our plans to recognize these
relationships.

There are also other economic questions related to the private-public relationship. Can user charges be used as a management tool? When the recreational development of an area becomes saturated, should fees be considered as a means of rationing recreation opportunity? If so, how do we accommodate competing social objectives such as those to provide opportunities across the board to all our citizens, especially those in and near major metropolitan areas for whom such charges may be a significant burden? And can these needs be met by the private sector?

Once having come to grips with the basic public-private issue, there is a second set of relationships that needs to be examined and rationalized. Among those things which will be done or handled by the public sector, how much is Federal, and how much is State or local?
The State and local share presents a question as significant as the relationship between public and private. Can cities contribute to the outdoor recreational opportunities of its citizens when these opportunities lie outside the geographic boundaries of the city? Recreation opportunity will probably become an increasingly important concern to people choosing between continuing to live in the central city and moving to the suburbs.

Traditionally, the role of the Federal Government has stemmed from its responsibilities as a major owner and manager of land. Public lands have typically been available to the public for recreation unless there was some specific reason to exclude public activity. The wildlife refuges were initially set up to preserve certain species from destruction or extinction.

It has not been until recent times that the Federal responsibility has been extended to an activist role,
especially in the East. What does this say about the future role of the Federal Government? While National Parks have been set aside to preserve and protect some unique historic or scenic treasure, large scale public recreation is new to these areas, too. I have already mentioned the new role of the National Park Service as represented by Cape Cod.

Another of the relationships which bears heavily on policy and program considerations in this area is the apparent imbalance of recreational opportunity. The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation has recently made a rough approximation, which will be more fully developed for the Nationwide Plan to be completed in 1968, of relative recreational opportunity among the statistical measuring units set up by the Bureau of the Census. The analysis didn't produce any surprises, but it did provide some concrete evidence to support earlier
feelings—that on the average, there is a deficit of recreational opportunity per capita in the Middle and South Atlantic areas and in some of the areas of the West, per capita opportunities are substantially above the national average.

We have not yet drawn very solid conclusions from these analyses, but we do see the implications and issues which such information raises. Should investment criteria for Federal investment in recreation programs somehow specifically take account of regional imbalances? If so, to what extent and when?

There is yet another set of relationships that must be taken into account in this field—how to balance supply and demand.

It is probably accurate to say that at no time in recent history has the aggregate supply of recreational opportunities equalled aggregate demand. We have been
working against a supply deficit which built up during World War II and which during the late 40's and 50's built up a substantial national backlog.

Thus, while there have been imbalances in aggregate supply, the imbalance of the supply of particular recreational opportunities--such as camping and trailer camping sites--has been increasing at rates substantially above our ability to meet it. There are other kinds of supply-demand relationships relating to questions of quality, which we do not adequately understand for which we are only now beginning to make adequate allowances in our planning process. For example, there are kinds of recreational experiences which can be obtained in a national park for which there is no trade-off opportunity in a highly developed intensive recreation area such as New York's Jones Beach. Yet, many of the kinds of pressures, including just the sheer weight of numbers on
large national park areas, militate strongly in favor of handling more and more people and more and more automobiles in national park areas. Our national parks preserve values which are for the most part irreplaceable and for which substitutes are not available at reasonable costs. This means Federal recreation policy must know enough about supply-demand relationships in relation to management objectives to permit sensible long-range planning and objectives.

These four basic sets of relationships must be understood if a well balanced recreation program for the American people is to exist. They are not totally independent; the question of recreational opportunity in the East versus those in the West is closely tied to the rationale for the development of federally owned lands and water resource projects.

Ever since the creation of the Bureau of Outdoor
Recreation and very specifically in recent months these issues have been increasingly coming to the top of our discussions. We do not yet have very many of the answers. But one truism of governmental policy is that half the battle is in knowing the right questions.

The role of the Federal Government in outdoor recreation programs is changing. In the last 10 years the change has been almost revolutionary. President Johnson and Secretary Udall have expressed strong intentions to make certain that the programs now under-way and the changes being made are enduring assets on the American scene. In the President's insistence on a vigorous "creative federalism", he has placed great responsibility on the role of States and local governments and of the private sector. The opportunities for the exercise of creativity is nowhere greater than in meeting the outdoor recreation needs of this Nation. I can assure
you of this Administration's intention to be creative
to the limit of its capacity and to welcome your
suggestions and your initiative.

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