

Edward C. Crafts Oral History Interview—JFK #1, 11/17/1969
Administrative Information

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Biographical Note

Crafts, Director of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation in the Department of the Interior (1962-1969), discusses the 1958 establishment of the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission, the 1963 creation of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, and the 1965 creation of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, among other issues.

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Edward C. Crafts—JFK #1

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First of Two Oral History Interviews

with

Edward C. Crafts

November 17, 1969
Washington, D. C.

By William W. Moss

For the John F. Kennedy Library

MOSS: Dr. Crafts, I would like to ask you several questions about the establishment of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation in the Department of the Interior. I think the story really begins with the report of the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission. First of all, you were at that time, prior to the establishment of the Outdoor Recreation Bureau, with the Forest Service in the Department of Agriculture, is that correct?

CRAFTS: That's correct.

MOSS: Right. Now, let me ask if there was any Forest Service participation in Mr. Rockefeller's [Laurance S. Rockefeller] Review Commission process?

CRAFTS: Yes, there was Forest Service participation in the preparation of the ORRRC [Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission] Report, and before that, in the concept that developed the legislation that set up the ORRRC Commission.

If I may go back just a moment, going clear back to the early years of the Forest Service, the early 1900s, the Forest Service periodically made appraisals of the timber situation in the United States. It had completed one, its last one, in about 1958. Nobody questioned the propriety of the Forest Service doing this because they were the recognized

experts in forestry and timber supplies, but about the time that their last timber appraisal was completed, there began to be increasing attention to the recreation question.

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MOSS: About what point in time was this?

CRAFTS: This was about 1956, '58. A recreation boom began to develop subsequent to World War II. The question arose: What executive agency could undertake an analysis of the recreation resource situation, roughly comparable to what the Forest Service did periodically on timber? It obviously wasn't the Forest Service, even though it had great recreation responsibilities for the national forests. It wasn't the Corps of Engineers [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers]; it wasn't the National Park Service because its responsibility and preoccupation was primarily with parks, which is one aspect of recreation. There was no private group to pick it up. So Joe Penfold [Joseph W. Penfold], who was conservation director of the Izaak Walton League [Izaak Walton League of America], talked to a number of the conservation people around town, including myself and others in the Forest Service, and out of these discussions came the idea that the only way to really get an objective look at the total recreation picture was to set up some independent body to do this. Out of that came the legislation that created the ORRRC, made up of several members of Congress and private citizens appointed by the President [Dwight D. Eisenhower] and serving at his pleasure.

This legislation passed, I think in 1958—I believe I'm right on that, or maybe it was 1960; I'm not sure which—and the citizen commissioners were appointed by the President—who was Eisenhower at that time. [Interruption] The congressmen were appointed by the Speaker [of the House of Representatives], and the senators by the President of the Senate.

Now, the Forest Service role during the working stages of the commission was one of cooperation, just as did the other executive agencies who have responsibilities in this field. The commission set up a rather large advisory group...

MOSS: Excuse me, let me interrupt you here, just for one thing. Was there any recognition by the Forest Service people at this point that here was a rich lode for them to mine later, and that they ought to get in on the ground floor? How did they do this?

CRAFTS: Oh, my yes, very definitely. You see, I was deputy chief of the Forest Service at that time, in charge of congressional relations and programs, policies, and that sort of thing. The Chief, who was Dick McArdle [Richard E. McArdle], used to sometimes describe my job somewhat facetiously as "being in charge of snakes." It was my job, really, to keep watch of such things. Sure, we recognized that there was a lot of potential trouble here—and a lot of potential good, depending on what the recommendations of the commission might be.

So our strategy in the Forest Service was one with a couple of prongs on it: one was to influence, to some extent, the selection of the presidential appointees and we did this, through Sherman Adams, who was close to the Forest Service. Second was to cooperate fully

with the commission and be sure that it had the necessary information that the Forest Service could supply them. Third was to keep very close track of this; we had staff men—others and myself—who worked on an informal working basis with their staff people constantly. I guess the fourth

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thing that the Forest Service did, it conducted simultaneously its own recreation resource appraisal of the national forests, partly to be a source of information to the commission, and partly so the Forest Service would be in a position to make this public and available; to present its own views in the event that the commission's recommendations were too distasteful to the Forest Service.

That internal F.S. [Forest Service] report and those findings were never made public. The statistical information, the basic data, were made available to the commission, but the analytical results and the analytical report, insofar as I know, still is only in Forest Service files because we felt, when the commission's report came out, that there was no such need. The official Department of Agriculture representative for the Secretary to the commission and a member of the commission's formal advisory body was Assistant Secretary Peterson [Ervin L. Peterson], who was over the Forest Service. I and others backstopped Peterson because most of the executive agency representations were at the assistant secretary or under secretary level.

Now, one thing that happened, of course, was a change in administration right during the work of the commission. There was a question whether President Kennedy [John F. Kennedy] might discharge the presidential appointees and appoint individuals of his own selection. This was sort of a touch-and-go matter there for a while in the first days of the Kennedy administration, but eventually the decision was made—and I don't know by whom—not to make a change, and to allow the Eisenhower appointees to continue on. That action, by either the President or someone acting for him, really has tended to be overlooked insofar as its significance goes, because by that action President Kennedy put a bipartisan stamp on the matter of public recreation.

MOSS: Was there any attempt, during the campaign, for instance, to work with Frank Smith's [Frank E. Smith] informal Advisory Committee on Natural Resources and that sort of thing?

CRAFTS: Yes, there was; there always is. The Forest Service made a practice of working every campaign with both parties, trying to be of help, trying to get things in the platform, in the candidate's speeches and so on that would be helpful. So there was, but there always is; I mean, this is standard operating practice.

MOSS: There was no direct connection between that and the decision that was eventually made to keep the...

CRAFTS: I think probably—and this is only conjecture here, but I'm fairly sure I'm right—this decision to keep the Eisenhower appointees was made as the result

of Clint Anderson [Clinton P. Anderson] talking to President Kennedy. Clint was a member of the commission; his health was pretty good at that time; he was a very powerful, influential member, and he had good relations with President Kennedy. As former Secretary of Agriculture, he had a deep interest in this; and, of course, he knew the Forest Service pretty well. I think, really, he was the individual who advised President Kennedy most effectively on this whole matter of the ORRRC Commission.

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MOSS: Right. Okay, we're up to the point at which President Kennedy decided to keep the same commission. As I remember it was—what? 31 January that they came out with the report. Let me ask first of all: What was the Forest Service reaction to the report itself? Did Forest Service people at all participate in staffing the report?

CRAFTS: Yes, but not in a decisive way, only in an advisory way and in doing some of the work. We knew in advance what the nature of the recommendations were going to be. I would say that the reactions of the Forest Service were sort of a tongue-in-the-cheek, wait-and-see proposition. The Forest Service didn't object to the establishment of a new separate agency with overall recreational responsibilities, provided that agency didn't have too much authority. The Forest Service recognized that it couldn't be such an agency; it did not want the Park Service to be that agency. It was disappointed that the agency was not set up as an independent agency but was placed in the Department of Interior; the Forest Service didn't like that at all. Really, I think, that's the only part of the main recommendations that it didn't like. You see, there were about four or five principal ones and about fifty secondary or sub-recommendations.

The question of whether the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation would be placed in one of the existing agencies of the Department or made an independent agency was a thorny point on which the commissioners themselves split. The congressional members, principally Senator Anderson and Senator Jackson [Henry M. Jackson] were the two who were most adamant against having an independent agency on the grounds that there were too many independent agencies and this tended to weaken the departments, so they compromised. It was a compromise—but it worked only fairly well, as we'll get into later—by placing the agency in Interior, and hopefully giving it certain line responsibilities in connection with normal program operations, such the Land and Water Conservation Fund—which was another one of the recommendations—and also giving it so-called coordinating interagency responsibilities with a semi-independent status from the Interior Department.

This was a peculiar beast. Actually, the agency, when it was created, was under the Secretary of Interior, and he was its boss. But Udall [Stewart L. Udall] and Jim Carr [James K. Carr] and John Carver [John A. Carver, Jr.] and Freeman [Orville L. Freeman] and Sam Hughes [Philip Samuel Hughes] in the Bureau of the Budget—all of whom were key people—as well as several members of Congress, all understood and recognized—this more than usual independence that the agency enjoyed when it came to interagency functions among the other agencies of the executive branch.

So here you had an agency, when it got into being and operative, that in connection with its dealings with the states and the private sector was in every normal way another Department of Interior agency. When it dealt with the other federal agencies it had a somewhat unique status. This worked all right, as long as the people whom I named were involved, but when they passed out of the picture—began to pass out of the picture—then the independent coordinating function diminished considerably in its effectiveness.

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MOSS : Let me back up just a minute. It's my understanding that, at one point prior to the establishment of the Bureau, the Forest Service came out with a recreation resources plan of some sort of its own. This was sent over to people at Interior, and the Interior people said, "Hold off on this for a bit, please, don't spread it around because we've got things in the works, and we want to coordinate all this." Then the Interior people were unhappy because the Forest Service jumped the gun and published it to all the members of Congress. Nothing on that?

CRAFTS: I have no recollection of what you're talking about. The Forest Service did have this report, but as I said earlier, it didn't make it available.

MOSS: I see.

CRAFTS: The only other report that it put out that I recall was a popularized condensation of this that was printed a couple of years later, after the Bureau was established. I just don't know what you're talking about.

MOSS: Okay, fine. Okay; this was just a little bit of something that I picked up.

CRAFTS: I don't think it's accurate.

MOSS: Right. Okay. Fine. Well, this is one of the things that these interviews are designed to do, you know, to take the rumors and the misleading information, if that's what it is, and get some authoritative statements on it.

CRAFTS: Well, I think I would know about this...

MOSS: Yes, I would think you would.

CRAFTS: ...and the Forest Service had such a report, but it did not spring it.

MOSS: All right. All right; fine. Now, at what point were you approached to be the director of the new Bureau? How did this come about?

CRAFTS: The report came out in, I think, the end of January, or early February...

MOSS: 31 January, '62.

CRAFTS: All right. Of course, by that time the Forest Service knew the new agency was going to be in Interior; the agency was going to be in Interior.

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MOSS: It had been decided by the time the report came out?

CRAFTS: Yes, that was part of the recommendations in the reports; and it had been decided, unless the President overruled it.

MOSS: Yes, the point I want to make is: it was pretty well assumed and understood...

CRAFTS: It was pretty well assumed, yes.

MOSS: Okay.

CRAFTS: The Forest Service was wondering who was going to be head of this. Of course, the Forest Service and the Park Service were the two agencies that would be most affected by the report and the new agency. The Forest Service didn't make any pitch for me, as far as I know, because I don't think they wanted to get rid of me. Actually, it had never entered my head, but I do remember a lot of other names that we had talked about. Mostly we were hoping it would be somebody from outside the federal establishment, somebody from one of the states, and so on.

One day during that interim period between the first of February and April, when the bureau was established—and I don't remember exactly when it was—I got a call from Chuck Stoddard [Charles H. Stoddard]. Stoddard is an old college classmate of mine, and oddly enough.... He wanted to go to work with Udall—he didn't know Udall when Udall became Secretary. I had known Udall through my work with Stewart when he was a congressman, so I had arranged for Stoddard to see Udall and have an interview. That apparently went all right: Udall gave him a job, and they got along all right for a few years; then later Stoddard left.

Stoddard said he'd had a call from Udall, who was out in Denver at some conservation meeting—and I don't remember what it was—to see whether I might be interested in heading the new agency. Whether Udall got that idea by himself in Denver, or whether somebody suggested it to him or not, I don't know to this day. I told Chuck, I just didn't know whether I would or not: I'd have to talk to the Secretary and find out a few things, and have to talk to Freeman, and so on.

When Udall got back, he asked me to come over, so I went over and talked to him. We had several discussions about his ideas of the job, what leeway I'd have and a lot of things. He talked to Freeman and then Freeman talked to me. I talked to two former assistant chiefs of the Forest Service who had retired—Ray Marsh [Raymond E. Marsh], who was my predecessor, and Chris Granger [C.M. Granger], who was a very fine capable man. I talked to them, and I talked to the newly appointed chief, who had been my colleague, Ed Cliff

[Edward P. Cliff]. All of these people were involved in this thing, and we discussed it all the way around. Of

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course, I finally had to make up my mind when Udall told me he'd like me to come; I had to make up my mind whether to do it or not.

I had been deputy chief for twelve years and presumably would continue on in that capacity. I thought, "Well now, this is something different. This is new and it'd be a challenge." I had my reservations that all Agriculture people have of going over to Interior, but I knew Udall and I knew the Under Secretary—I knew Jim Carr—and I knew John Carver: all three of them. I finally decided to give it a whirl. That's about the way it worked out, as far as I was concerned.

Of course, the Forest Service liked the idea in a way. I don't think they were particularly happy that I left, but they liked the idea of me being in there, rather than somebody from the Park Service or somebody else. This was the best possible solution for the Forest Service, if it had to be in Interior, to have me there. Freeman liked it for the same reason Udall liked it, I think, because it balanced out the part about the agency being in Interior, and it tended to assure there would be good working relationships between the two departments. My selection tended to improve the chances. Then, I knew a lot of members of Congress, and there was going to have to be a lot of work in connection with legislation to get the thing going; and Udall thought that probably I could be helpful there. I think these were the things that went through their minds. That's about the story.

MOSS: As a sidelight, in a way, I think it's relevant here. Do you know about the so-called Treaty of the Potomac...

CRAFTS: Well I wrote it.

MOSS: ... between Freeman—you did?—and Udall?

CRAFTS: Oh yes, I wrote it.

MOSS: Tell me how it came about.

CRAFTS: I will, but maybe I should say one thing before on the previous subject. The Park Service was very unhappy. I know Wirth [Conrad L. Wirth] has been alleged to have said—and "alleged" is the right word because I never heard him say it—that, "There'll never be another park or recreation area now that they've picked Ed Crafts." Of course, that's not true; there have been four new national parks since then and about thirty pieces of recreation legislation. But anyway, the Park Service didn't like having a Forest Service man in there, although Connie called me up and was very gracious about it when he heard the news. There were troubles right off the bat within a few weeks.

The Treaty of the Potomac came a little bit later. This was an idea that Udall, Freeman, and I had to attempt to put on paper sort of a working agreement between the two

departments in this recreation field. You see, during the years just before the Bureau was created, and while the Commission was functioning, the Park Service was looking with covetous eyes at numerous Forest Service areas for possible conversion

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to national parks, monuments and so on. We had some very difficult times—by “we” I mean the Forest Service—and the Park Service. The agencies did not get along well. When Lyle Watts [Lyle F. Watts] was chief, they got along pretty well. Then during McArdle’s tenure and Connie Wirth’s tenure, relations got progressively worse. There were all sorts of inter-bureau squabbles, both under cover and they’d also bubble up to the surface.

MOSS: To what would you attribute the deterioration of...

CRAFTS: Mainly to the fact that the Forest Service, within the national forests, and in the West, had most of the desirable land, and the Park Service wanted it—wanted parts of it. There weren’t many other places for the Park Service to go because the types of areas, the scenic areas and the areas of grandeur, for the most part, were in the national forests. So it was a question of the “haves” and the “have nots”—and a very aggressive expansion program by the Park Service, under its “Mission ’66.”

The Treaty of the Potomac, as I said, was an outgrowth of the idea of trying to put something down in writing and there were some significant things in it. There was an agreement that neither agency would make surveys of the other agency’s lands without that agency’s knowledge and concurrence—and this very thing had been going on. There was an agreement that there would be an interagency study of the North Cascades [North Cascades National Park]. This was a specific way to begin to work toward a resolution of that issue. There was an agreement that the Oregon Dunes would be recommended for transfer to the National Park Service—this hasn’t yet happened—and there were two or three other lesser things.

Actually the Treaty of the Potomac worked pretty well. It set up the Cascades operation, which did come to fruition. It worked pretty well as far as each agency keeping the other informed. Of course, there was a new agency, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, to sort of monitor the treaty and that helped. That’s about the answer on the Treaty of the Potomac. It about broke apart toward the end of the Johnson presidency [Lyndon B. Johnson]. Things went along pretty well between the two departments for the first four years, I would say, and then things began to get pretty touchy between Freeman and Udall.

MOSS: Why?

CRAFTS: A number of things. Specific issues; the Cascades was one of them. This was rammed down Freeman’s throat. In the last analysis, the Forest Service read public opinion wrong; they read the determination of the Washington congressional delegation to have a park wrong. The [inaudible]’s brought the Cascades problem on themselves, really. I can go into that later, but the Cascades was one major sore

point. The Redwoods [Redwood National Park] was another, although there the Interior Department and the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, supported

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the Forest Service on its purchase unit. Udall himself would waffle on it; he'd blow hot and cold. Then there was the Mineral King question in connection with the Sequoia National Park and the proposed Disneyland winter sports area. This was a very touchy one. There were these several issues and there undoubtedly were others, but those were three very difficult ones; and there just got to be too many points of difference. Then Udall not only hired me away from Freeman, he hired Boyd Rasmussen [Boyd L. Rasmussen] as head of the Bureau of Land Management after he ousted Stoddard. And while Freeman was gracious about losing Boyd, he didn't like it very well.

Then there was competition, too; both agencies were endeavoring to be the conservation department. Both were riding the recreation bandwagon at the time, too; they were trying to outdo each other. The things I've mentioned, I think—the Mineral King area, the Cascades, the Redwoods and one other—were the...

MOSS: The Oregon Dunes?

CRAFTS: No, they were in agreement on Oregon Dunes. The Flaming Gorge [Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area] in Utah: That finally got settled and was made available to the Forest Service. I guess I had a lot to do with getting Interior to go along with Forest Service jurisdiction, but a lot of people in Interior didn't want to. The division of responsibility on the Whiskeytown-Shasta-Trinity National Recreation Area was another one. It finally got worked out, but it wasn't easy.

MOSS: This brings up, in a way, a rather difficult question. That is, were you aware of any attempts by Agriculture and the Forest Service to cash in on "their man in court," as it were, on your being there?

CRAFTS: No. I would say no. If anything, it was the other way around. Of course, I knew the Forest Service very well and all its people; they're all my friends and I knew their policies, and confidences. I kept faith with the Forest Service; I never revealed things that I shouldn't. They respected that; they are an agency of high integrity, and they never attempted to take advantage, as you say, of the fact that I was there. I had a lot of help from the Forest Service, particularly in the early days of the new Bureau. I don't know whether the Bureau would have gotten off the ground if the Forest Service had really set out to torpedo it by gutting its legislation or gutting its appropriations; whereas just the opposite was true with the National Park Service. Now, you haven't asked about that, but maybe I'll mention this.

MOSS: Yes, go ahead.

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CRAFTS: The Bureau was set up by secretarial order in April. When it started the first day there were only four people.

MOSS: Who were these four?

CRAFTS: Two secretaries, Harry Rice [Harry W. Rice], who's still one of the assistant directors of the Bureau, and myself. Stevens [Laurence N. Stevens], the associate director, came on a week or two later. They now have about five hundred people.

MOSS: All right. Let me stop just a moment. How did Rice and Stevens get into it?

CRAFTS: I recruited Rice.... I was planning to follow an organization pattern that I'd thought out in my own mind and I needed an assistant director to handle the administrative affairs of the Bureau—mainly the budget and personnel and the business accounting and fiscal management. Rice was an Assistant Director of the Office of Fiscal Control for budgets and accounts in the Secretary's office in Interior. His name was suggested to me by John Shanklin [John F. Shanklin], who was staff advisor to John Carver at the time and who later came with the Bureau. John Shanklin and I had been friends for many years. I got all sorts of help from Udall's office and from Carver's office. Rice came to see me, was interviewed, and wanted to come; it was a great promotion for him, and he came. That's how he got into it.

Stevens was then the Deputy Staff Director for ORRRC. He and one or two others did most of the real writing of the ORRRC report. Frank Sargent [Francis W. Sargent], who is now the governor of Massachusetts, was the actual staff director, but Frank was largely the front man and didn't participate much in the actual putting together of the report. Stevens knew that report; he knew the subject very well; and he had a good reputation in Interior as a professional man. He had never had any line responsibility; he'd always functioned in a staff capacity. I talked to a lot of people; I needed somebody who could provide a transition from the ORRRC commission, with all the information and background experience it had. So, I talked to Larry. Of course, he had hoped to be named director; he wanted the job that was given to me, and he was disappointed that he didn't get it. We did not know each other, but I went over and talked to him. We had a nice talk and discussed it a couple of times; he thought it over for a few days and decided he'd take it. That's how he came.

Well, to go back to our initial days, we were down in the basement of Interior, four of us, in one small room; it was real bad. Then there wasn't any money; the way they financed us from April to July was to assess every agency some money; the Secretary's office rounded up \$50,000. Of course, this didn't make the new agency popular by...

MOSS: Were these agencies only in Interior?

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CRAFTS: Yes, every Interior agency. Then at the beginning of the next fiscal year, the

money that the Park Service had appropriated to it under its 1936 Recreation Study Act X of about \$800,000 was transferred to the new Bureau. This was our operating money for that year.

The trouble was that Connie tried to block that and it finally got to the point where there wasn't any money to pay us. It required action by somebody up the line from Connie, namely Carver or somebody above him. John just hated to lay the law down to Connie and say, "Well, Connie, this is the way it's going to be." He was trying to get Connie to come along, and Connie was throwing sand in the gears in every way he could; he's very good at that.

So, here's how the thing finally got resolved: I was on the Hill one day, and went in to talk to Clint Anderson, who, again, was our angel on this thing, and he asked me how things were going; I told him, and I told about some of these money troubles. He got on the phone with Carver, and I was embarrassed because I happened to be there and I heard the conversation. He really read the riot act to Carver, and he reminded John that he, Clint, had opposed Carver's confirmation in the Interior Committee and that he expected that this thing would be straightened out that day, period. If Carver didn't, then he was going to take it up with Udall.

Well, I got back downtown and had a call from John, and went to see him. He said, "I've just had a call from Clint Anderson." I said, "I know it, I was there." John took it very nicely and he straightened it out, but it took that push to do it. From then on, things went fairly well with the Park Service.

Of course, a lot of our initial personnel were personnel who had been financed by this type of work under the Park Service and had transferred over. The way that was handled, we interviewed all the people who were Park Service employees and who thought they might want to transfer to the new Bureau; there was quite a number of them. I gave this job to Stevens to do. Some he thought would be good to have, and some he didn't. Where we had a situation where the individual wanted to come and we wanted to have him, then they transferred him over. There might have been fifty like that, I guess. Some of them worked out, and some of them didn't work out at all, but the Park Service didn't really unload on us, because we weren't forced to take anybody. If we took somebody who didn't work out, it was our fault that we weren't able to appraise him correctly.

We did have trouble recruiting. We were a new agency in a new field with an uncertain future. You had the old line agencies with distinguished record, and security—like the Forest Service, the Park Service, the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, and so on. We got a lot of applications, we got malcontents, dissidents, job-jumpers, opportunists, but only a few dedicated people. We went through this

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process of getting people. Then, of course, it's hard to get rid of them under civil service, but there are ways, and in most cases you can do it; it takes time. It wasn't up until about three years had elapsed—until our organic legislation had been enacted and until the Land and Water Conservation Fund had been enacted—that we were over this uncertain period and no longer had this concern about whether we were going to continue as an agency. Then our recruiting became somewhat easier. We had no leverage to help us compete with old line

agencies. We couldn't give higher grades like temporary commissions do. We had no incentive for people to come with us unless they happened to really be interested in the work or could see some way to better themselves.

MOSS: What other problems did you have in setting it up, as far as getting the...

CRAFTS: It's quite an experience to set up a new agency—every conceivable problem. You see, we were set up by executive action; we didn't have the blessing of Congress. They scratched gravel to get us money for the first two years; we had our troubles recruiting people; and our duties weren't clear. So, the first couple of years we devoted to trying to build our staff, trying to get a variety of disciplines, trying to establish relationships with the states, trying to get two basic pieces of legislation through—the Organic Act for the Bureau, which didn't pass that first year, and...

MOSS: It wasn't until the next May.

CRAFTS: It wasn't until the next May, that's right. But we knew it was going to pass. I mean, we talked it over with Wayne Aspinall [Wayne N. Aspinall], and with Scoop Jackson, and they agreed they'd pass it the next spring..

MOSS: Why didn't it get through the first time?

CRAFTS: The first time the Administration sent it up with the responsibilities in it for planning, for coordination, for research, for technical aids. They also had in it a grant program to make statewide recreation plans, and Congress wouldn't buy that.

MOSS: This is somewhat different from the nationwide coordinated recreation program?

CRAFTS: Oh yes. The state plan requirements were finally moved over and put in the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act the next time around. We took the state phases out of the Organic Act, and moved them over, as Congress wanted, and put them in the Land-Water Conservation Fund Act. Then the next May the organic bill passed through with relatively little problem because it was mostly a study and cooperation bill. It did not give authority to coordinate; it gave authority to promote coordination; and that is quite a thing. The

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only real teeth in the bill that passed, the so-called Organic Act, was a requirement that the federal agencies carry out their recreation programs in general conformance with the periodic nationwide outdoor recreation plans. These are the national plans which are to be prepared every five years. The first one, I think, is about to come out; it's way overdue.

This was a compromise. Congressman Saylor [John P. Saylor] wanted something like this in; he wanted something stronger than this. Agriculture, with reluctance, went along with this, so this was really a compromise between the House Interior Committee and the Department of Agriculture.

MOSS: This still puts you in the position of inducing action rather than actually engaged in moving the machinery of government along your...

CRAFTS: That's right. That's right. You're in the situation of inducing, of persuading, of promoting, of moral suasion, this sort of thing. Of course, the vehicle for this was the President's Council on Recreation and Natural Beauty. It started out as a council on recreation, and then was broadened. At first the President's order didn't include the Citizens Advisory Committee [Citizens Advisory Committee on Recreation and Natural Beauty], but just the President's Council.

MOSS: When was this set up?

CRAFTS: It was set up a month after the Bureau was set up, almost simultaneously. And there were compromises there too. As it was initially set up, there was a rotating chairmanship, every two years, with Secretary Udall of Interior first, Secretary of Agriculture second, Secretary of Commerce third, and so on. The Director of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation served as the staff director for the council, and one of the divisions of the Bureau was to staff council.

Udall made quite a thing of this; he participated actively while he was chairman and so did Freeman when his term came. The council met regularly and it achieved a number of actions. It issued seven major across-the-board federal recreation policy statements, printed, and signed by all cabinet members. The council settled a long-standing dispute between the Forest Service and the Corps of Engineers, on the Allegheny Reservoir in Pennsylvania. It started a National Scenic Roads study, for which the Department of Commerce did the staff work. They met regularly and White House staffers usually participated. Sometimes this was Lee White [Lee C. White], who was in the White House at that time, and sometimes it was Dick Goodwin [Richard N. Goodwin]. Sam Hughes always came for the Bureau of the Budget.

This council during the first four years had a good bit of muscle and did accomplish quite a bit toward bringing the agencies together

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and toward a unified federal policy and coordination. Then Secretary Connor [John T. Connor] succeeded Freeman and he had no interest whatsoever. It just went poof!—like that.

At about that time, or a little before then, the Citizens' Advisory Committee had been set up under Laurance Rockefeller. The Citizens' Committee is something the Council was instrumental in getting to happen. I think it was a very good thing, because that advisory committee served as an advisory board to the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, as well as advisory to the council. So really the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation had Udall as its boss in

some things; it had the President's Council as its boss in some things; and it had the Citizen's Advisory Committee as an outside advisory board looking over its shoulder. Laurance Rockefeller was an active chairman, and his committee carried on studies of the impact of utility industry, community action, roads on recreation. It was instrumental in some of the language that finally ended up in the Department of Transportation Organic Act, section 4f. It was instrumental in the beautification program and in the Highway Beautification Act. Of course, Rockefeller had instant access to Mrs. Johnson [Claudia Alta "Lady Bird" Johnson] and President Johnson. I can't remember whether this was set up while Kennedy was still president or not, or whether it was set up afterwards; I think it was afterwards.

MOSS: I didn't find it in the Organization Manual [U.S. Government Organization Manual].

CRAFTS: I don't believe this happened during President Kennedy's administration; I think it was shortly thereafter.

MOSS: '66 wasn't it? I think it was 1966.

CRAFTS: About that, yes. The Council was frustrating in a way, too, particularly after Udall and Freeman had served out their terms, in that then we began to see Udall and Freeman dealing directly with each other, rather than through the Council; and Udall and Weaver [Robert C. Weaver] would deal with each other. The cabinet officers would tend to deal bilaterally rather than go through the Council. When you finally did get something to go before the Council and you had half the cabinet on it, the other members would usually sit there and not take a very active role, particularly if it was something of a real issue, because they didn't know when something would come up later on and their colleagues would get back at them. So they preferred to handle these issues either bilaterally with their counterpart in another department, or deal with the White House staff, or take it up at a full cabinet session. This was the weakness in this concept of a cabinet-level advisory council.

The other big weakness was the rotating chairmanship. This finally was changed just toward the end of the Johnson Administration. The Vice President was made permanent chairman; and Humphrey [Hubert H. Humphrey] began to pick it up and put some life back into it in the six months that he had.

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MOSS: You were talking a little bit about Anderson being your angel on the Hill, and Saylor pushing for a stronger authority for you. Who were the pros and cons on the Hill as far as you were concerned, among the other...

CRAFTS: Maybe I overemphasized Clint's role. Anderson's role was right at the beginning of the Bureau; then his health began to go down and he sort of stepped aside, although occasionally he would help. Our strong supporters on the Senate side were Jackson, Bible [Alan Bible], Church [Frank Church], Metcalf [Lee

Metcalf], Gaylord Nelson, Len Jordan [Leonard B. Jordan], Tom Kuchel [Thomas H. Kuchel], Carl Hayden [Carl T. Hayden]. I may have forgotten some, but those were the main ones—George Aiken [George D. Aiken]. Both Republicans and Democrats; more Democrats than Republicans, but both on the House side, Wayne Aspinall, John Saylor, Rogers Morton [Rogers C.B. Morton], John Kyl, “Slick” Rutherford [J.T. Rutherford] before he was defeated, Roy Taylor [Roy A. Taylor], Julia Hansen [Julia Butler Hansen], Ben Reifel [Benjamin Reifel]; those were the principal ones, I think.

MOSS: Sounds like a pretty solid group of friends.

CRAFTS: Oh, we had a very wide base of operations. This was really our great strength, the breadth of our support on the Hill. I could go on, I mean there’s Henry Reuss [Henry S. Reuss] and John Dingell [John D. Dingell]...

MOSS: Did you have anyone who was giving you a rough time?

CRAFTS: Not constantly and continuously. Ed Edmondson [Edmond A. Edmondson] gave us a very rough time on the charge features of the Land and Water Conservation Fund...

MOSS: Yes, I want to get to that.

CRAFTS: ... but as far as the functions of the Bureau—its existence, its success, its programs in general—he was all for it and a very great help. On that one particular thing he gave us trouble. He had some help from Carl Albert [Carl B. Albert] and from two or three others; I think it was Hall [Durward G. Hall] of Missouri, and one or two Texas congressmen. George Mahon [George H. Mahon] was a great help to us. On the Senate side, we didn’t have any real problems. Sometimes on specific things, we’d run into a little something, but not in general, no.

MOSS: Let’s talk about that Land and Water Conservation Fund for a minute or two. It was part of the recommendation of the Commission that you have a system of user fees. Now, how did you go about trying to get this implemented and the opening of the Land and Water Conservation Fund...

CRAFTS: That was one of the first jobs the Bureau had. We worked about a year drafting it and working with the Hill. We were working out a bill that we knew before it went up would be fairly palatable. The Administration sent up an aborted one just about the time I transferred to Interior, because they’d been working on it,

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but it got nowhere. So we spent almost a year developing legislation that finally was enacted pretty much in the form that it was submitted. The bill consisted of several things, nearly all of which were in the recommendations of the ORRRC. Of course, it was more specific than

the commission recommendation. It had to be. When you write legislation, you have to get specific. It provided for two types of grants.

One of the basic philosophies of the ORRRC commission was that land needed for recreation purposes should be acquired as promptly as possible before it was committed to other uses or priced out of the market, even if that land would not be developed for maybe ten or fifteen years in the future. All right, how to do it? One was to step up the acquisition programs of the federal agencies, namely the Forest Service, Park Service, Fish and Wildlife. Another was try to let the states move in and encourage state and local government participation. The Land and Water Conservation Fund provided for a series of monies coming into a fund which would be available for three years, but would have to be appropriated each year. That money was to come from a motorboat fuels tax on pleasure boats; from proceeds from the sale of federal real estate of any kind; and, thirdly, from user fees and admission fees to federal recreation areas.

On the fee part, the Park Service for many years had been charging for entrance to certain parks; the money so collected went into miscellaneous receipts. The Forest Service was just beginning to charge at certain campground areas. The Corps of Engineers did not charge—the Corps of Engineers was active all through the Oklahoma-Arkansas-Missouri area—and there was a provision in one of the Rivers and Harbors Acts that Corps reservoirs would be available to the public free. This was amended in the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act and the local people charged breach of faith. The congressmen from these Corps areas did likewise. The Congress can always change its mind. So there was great opposition to a fee program and there was philosophical opposition in the agencies that were supposed to administer it. A lot of them just didn't subscribe to the idea; they thought these things ought to be free. So there was both opposition on the Hill and there was opposition within the agencies that were supposed to execute it. Also, unfortunately, the executive order which the President issued to implement it didn't give the final say with the Secretary of the Interior. Interior could set up standards and criteria and guidelines, but then Freeman would decide as to what areas to apply of those guidelines to areas under his jurisdiction, and so on. Well, this killed the coordination right there.

Now as to outside interests. The recreation boating industry didn't oppose a fee program too much. The people who did oppose fees on federal water recreation areas were the commercial barge operators. They opposed them because they thought it would be setting a precedent—or dangerously close to a precedent—for the charging of fees for the

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commercial use of the waterways and the locks up the Mississippi, the Ohio and the other navigable rivers. Of course, commercial use is all free now, and this is the way the barges are able to compete with trucks and railroads, so this was very serious to them. This was the real, real source of what you might call the silent opposition. This is why there's language in the bill that, "There shall be no charge for the use of waters," and so on.

MOSS: The implications of this are, of course, you could charge for airways, and all the rest...

CRAFTS: Yes, you could. As to the way the money was used, about half of it went to the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation to divide among the three federal agencies.

This is where we did exercise some program responsibility and direction, they had to submit their acquisition proposals to us, each parcel, and there were guidelines spelled out by the appropriations committees. We exercised a great deal of power, here. It was to the agencies' interest to cooperate with us on other things, as well as in this particular area.

The Park Service got the bulk of the federal share, the Forest Service next, and the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, not very much. Usually the division between the three agencies was spelled out in the appropriations acts, with some latitude for our discretion.

The other half of the money, which was about a hundred to a hundred and twenty-five million dollars a year, went to the states for them to match fifty-fifty for acquisition or development of recreation lands. The states could pass some of this down to local governments if they wanted to, but we couldn't allocate or deal directly with the local governments. The states, to qualify, had to submit and have approved a statewide outdoor recreation plan, which was quite an operation in itself. That's basically the way the Land and Water Fund Act worked. This became a very popular program, and along with it came the concept of national recreation areas, which is one of the things that came out of the President's Council on Recreation that President Kennedy set up.

MOSS: Could you hold your train of thought right there? I've got to flip this tape.

[BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1]

CRAFTS: Congress then passed over the next four or five years, about thirty recreation enactments, including about half a dozen new national recreation areas, four new national parks, several new national seashores, a system of national trails, a system of national rivers, and so on. These all stemmed from the Land and Water Conservation Fund because Congress could foresee that there probably was going to be money. But it soon became apparent that we weren't getting enough money. The income from fees was not measuring up to our expectations; the other sources were, in general, and of course, the

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real source of money in the first years of the Land and Water Fund were the proceeds from the sale of federal surplus property. This was really a bonanza.

We were asked, both by the Administration—I think this was about the time of President Kennedy's assassination—and by the Congress to assess what was happening to the price of recreation land and what total fiscal demands we could foresee for about ten years ahead. We did this, and it was very apparent that there wasn't in prospect anywhere near enough federal money, even if it was going to be matched by the states. As I remember, we figured it would take three hundred million a year for ten years—that's three billion dollars—with the states matching half of that, making it about four and one half billion dollars to do the job. So then we sent up a proposed amendment to the Land and Water

Conservation Fund to earmark part of the offshore mineral receipts. This encountered a good deal of opposition...

MOSS: Who originated this proposal?

CRAFTS: The Administration. It was during President Johnson's administration. This was an additional assured hundred million dollars more a year, but it provided that the "golden eagle," part of the fee aspects, would be repealed—I mean, would terminate—this coming March or April, so you really were trading an assured hundred million dollars for only five to six or seven million dollars you were going to lose. We were able to get the support of the Edmondson bloc, which didn't like the fees, or the mineral receipts; and that is really how that bill went through. It was signed in July '68, and that really opened the door to the Cascades Park, to the Redwoods Park, to the Rivers [National Wild and Scenic Rivers System] and Trails [Nationwide System of Trails] and so on. Now, this is later than the Kennedy Administration, but it sort of completes the picture.

MOSS: Let me talk about the White House a little bit. You were talking about who was helpful in Congress. Who were the people at the White House who were the most helpful to you, and why?

CRAFTS: You mean right in the White House itself?

MOSS: In the White House itself.

CRAFTS: You're not counting the Budget Bureau?

MOSS: I would include the Budget Bureau.

CRAFTS: All right. Well, the person that was the most helpful, if you include the Budget Bureau, was Sam Hughes, who was Deputy Director and who had a very great personal interest in these matters and whom I fortunately had had a good working relationship with when I was in the Forest Service: it was a combination

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of circumstances. He's just left the Nixon Administration [Richard M. Nixon], as you know. He was probably the most helpful. Then there was Lee White...

MOSS: What sort of things did he do for you?

CRAFTS: Well, Sam would get administration approval on our legislative proposals, for one thing. He would give us a break on our budget requests because in his position as the number two man—Charlie Schultze [Charles L. Schultze] and his predecessor turned these conservation matters over to Hughes for decision—he didn't have to deal with anybody higher up in the Budget Bureau. If he got a hot one he'd go over

and check with some of the White House staffers, but mostly he could handle these himself. Both Freeman and Udall would take direction from him on some of these matters that were controversial.

MOSS: This would work throughout Interior and Agriculture, not just your particular bureau, right?

CRAFTS: no, it would be more with respect to my particular bureau, or more with respect to, I would say, the conservation-forest-park matters. I don't know as it worked on mineral matters so much, or reclamation.

Then there was Lee White, who was very helpful.

MOSS: And what did he do?

CRAFTS: Well, he'd say, "Yes," when he needed to. He would call meetings together, preside at them—controversial things. He got deeply involved, as I recall, in the Allegheny Reservoir issue.

MOSS: Were you involved in that at all?

CRAFTS: Oh, yes. I was the one who negotiated that one. You see, that was done through the vehicle of the President's Council.

MOSS: Yes, you mentioned that. I didn't know that that was the way that came about. I knew there was a meeting at the White House, that Lee White had chaired the meeting, but I didn't know how it came about.

CRAFTS: Well that's how it came about.

MOSS: Were you present at the meeting?

CRAFTS: Yes.

MOSS: What transpired at it?

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CRAFTS: It was a polite meeting, and the Corps pretty largely figured they had lost by then anyway. Lee was very good at this: he didn't lay down an order, but it was very apparent the direction in which he thought probably the solution would go. It was also apparent that if they couldn't and didn't reach agreement, he would settle it. He did this very skillfully. Well, shortly thereafter the conference, the Corps and Agriculture agree. That was about it. There must have been fifteen people there, something like that: the Corps was there, the Forest Service was there, I and one of my assistants was there. Sam Hughes was there, and Lee was there. I don't know when Harry McPherson

[Harry C. McPherson, Jr.] came into the picture, but he was helpful. He sort of inherited Lee's role. First I think he was an assistant to Lee, then he sort of inherited his role. He was helpful. Mike Manatos [Mike N. Manatos] was very helpful; later on—this is after Kennedy's time—Califano [Joseph A. Califano, Jr.] was; going back into the Kennedy period, Dick Goodwin was. These are about the ones: Lee White, Dick Goodwin, Mike Manatos, Califano, and McPherson.

MOSS: All right. I think what I'm fishing for, too, is—you're talking in a way about a response to requests on your part for help and so on—was there any initiative coming the other way?

CRAFTS: Yes, although I can't recollect specific examples, but there was. They would call me up on occasion, and suggest that I look into this, or that they'd had some contact on the Hill, and would I do something about it? So there was: it was an exchange both ways.

MOSS: A general impression that I've been getting on the whole Interior-White House relationship was that the White House pretty well left Interior to run itself, as far as policy and programs were concerned, but would settle squabbles, and that kind of thing, without actually putting its own oar in on policy-making.

CRAFTS: I think that's largely true. There were exceptions though, perhaps more during the Johnson days than the Kennedy days. But, of course, you must remember that Udall was very aggressive: he was a complete self-starter and he never ran out of ideas. They didn't have to push Interior as long as they were generally on the right track; the impetus was there in the Department, in Udall and the people around Udall. Whether this was a factor or not I don't know. Of course, there were preoccupations with the War and with the other things. Both presidents, Kennedy and Johnson, had a real interest in the functions of the Interior Department.

One other thing I might just mention: In a way it was the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation that pushed Udall east of the Mississippi and also pushed him into the cities. He recognized this; he and I used to talk about it. You see, a good bit of money from the Land and Water Conservation Fund went into the big cities such as

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New York, Miami, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, San Francisco. Interior had not had programs in the cities before. In the East too. The Forest Service had to spend 85 percent of its money east of the one hundredth meridian. Many of these new recreation areas, like Cape Cod [Cape Cod National Seashore] and Fire Island [Fire Island National Seashore] and Assateague [Assateague National Seashore], all up and down the Atlantic coast—and the Allagash in Maine—are eastern areas. So until water pollution was transferred over to Interior from H.E.W. [Department of Health, Education, and Welfare], the recreation programs were the principal, if not the sole, vehicle that Interior had to get into the cities and into the East. This was recognized in the White House, and they liked it.

MOSS: This is interesting, because you can observe a shift in Udall from being a Westerner to becoming an Easterner almost. I was wondering about this because there's some indication of a Western, anti-Eastern establishment, reverse-snobishness kind of thing that seems to go on with the Interior Department versus the Ivy Leaguers and the "Irish Mafia" in the White House, and so on. Did you...

CRAFTS: I didn't encounter any of that at all. In fact, just the opposite during Kennedy's days, just the opposite.

To pay credit to the Hill—and of course they did an awful lot—a lot of this wouldn't have happened without Congress and the Interior committees [Interior and Insular Affairs Committees]. The members of the Interior committees are mainly Westerners. On the Senate the only one east of the Mississippi is Gaylord Nelson; that's not true on the House side, but they didn't exercise a Western slant in their consideration of these matters. They were very statesmanlike about substantive legislation. You'd find more provinciality would follow the authorization action when there would be a question of getting money to implement an acquisition. Then they'd be pitching for their own state or for the area that was in their state or near it. On the initial authorizing of Assateague, for example, you had widespread support from Western members. There was no question about that or Fire Island right there in New York City, and so on.

MOSS: That Fire Island thing is an interesting one, because you had all the local New York political people involved in it.

CRAFTS: Yes, but it worked pretty well. We went to see it—this was fairly early in the day. We took a helicopter trip over it, Udall and Mrs. Udall [Ermalee Udall], local people and the Mayor [Robert Ferdinand Wagner, Jr.] and so on. I don't know who all was along; it was two or three helicopters. Then we put field teams out studying it; and there was a lot of local opposition, at first. But there always is; the opposition to these things is always local. We initially recommended an area extending to the east end of Long Island about twenty miles further, clear up to...

MOSS: ... the Coast Guard station.

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CRAFTS: I don't know whether it went clear up to Montauk Point; I think not, but it took in Southampton. This just created an awful furor because a lot of the wealthy people had their summer homes in that area. This turned out to be one of the smartest things we ever did because it polarized the opposition right on that strip. Everybody concentrated on getting that strip eliminated from the proposal, which we never really thought had much chance anyway, so we finally agreed to let that go out and then the rest of it sailed through. Udall has often referred to that as something that was done deliberately; actually, it wasn't, but it turned out to be a very good tactic. Once we got over

that hurdle on Fire Island and a few other specific points of compromise, we didn't have any trouble.

MOSS: Very good. I tell you what I'd like to do now, I think, is to let this tape sort of settle, review it, go over my notes, and so on, and get in touch with you, and see what I have in the way of a second interview.

CRAFTS: All right.

MOSS: Okay?

CRAFTS: Fine.

[END OF INTERVIEW #1]

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