

Noted Naturalist Questions Building Sweet Home Dam

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"The resources of this nation are of no value except when used for the benefit of the people. They are for the use, not misuse of our citizens," stated William L. Finley, noted naturalist and lecturer, addressing hundreds of Sweet Home citizens at the regular public Forum meeting, here Thursday evening.

"If you had a farm on which you raised all sorts of vegetables and other farm produce and then you had the idea that you might help people if you would let them come in and help themselves to the things on your farm it would be human nature to come in and help themselves, but some would think it their right to take too much and soon the farm, without proper regulation, would be wrecked. The people are permitted to use outdoor resources but one wants more than another. We have a wonderful country, but carelessness of the people bring destruction. Facts show that \$300,000 acres of our land are destroyed each year because people do not care for the soil. People cut down the trees for buildings, but while they cut the trees they give no thought to replanting or reforestation.

With the timber gone thriving towns become wide places in the road, the water supply of the country becomes less and less, soil erosion takes away the fertile soil and the country is destroyed to a large extent.

The nation must be governed by proper rules and regulations in regard to preserving our natural resources so that land owned by individuals may not become a burden to them through taxation. Then each individual may do his share to preserve the lands of our nation, was some of the thoughts advanced by Mr. Finley.

Mr. Finley pointed out how swamps, lakes and ponds were drained to create more land for agriculture, how wild life was eliminated, how water levels were lowered and how through misuse of our resources the great dust bowl was created out of a fertile plain, and how the government was now trying to restore these areas by holding back the soil water and planting trees.

Clear, pure water where fish can live is just as important to our nation as land. Waste of a town or industrial plant dumped into a river pollutes the water so it is not fit for recreational purposes and poisons aquatic life, stated the speaker.

Congress passed a law enabling the government to spend money for the irrigation of land of their own. Then came the private land-owners who thought they would like to get help from the government. Today the government is paying \$150.00 to \$200.00 and over an acre to water the soil. Our government is spending hundreds of millions of dollars to get farmers not to plant certain crops and they are spending more money to build dams for irrigation purposes so that the farmers can produce larger crops.

Bear in mind that our streams in the Pacific Northwest are valuable because of salmon runs. Benefit of fishing resources to the people of the Pacific Northwest amounts to 10,000,000 dollars annually. These industries should be carried on not for us,

but for the children of the future.

Power can be developed in lots of different ways and lots of different area. It can be gotten from rivers that are not salmon streams.

The government spent up to last year \$2,182,000,000 in developing the headwaters of rivers for navigation purposes. Figures show that the people are paying from one to five thousand dollars per ton for moving freight up and down the rivers in inland water transportation. \$800,000 was spent in deepening the channel of the Columbia River from The Dalles on up so that boats might move up. Freight moving along the river today is 50 to 75 years out of date because the country is lined and interlined by roads and railroads. Should spending money in this way continue when

Plans were made for a picnic nels for these rivers costs as much as building a railroad.

The government has been spending a tremendous amount of money and people in all parts of the country from the Atlantic to the Pacific, North and South felt that they ought to grab as much as they can. In this section the matter which came up was the Willamette Valley Project. We're not in any way opposed to the development of the Willamette River or State of Oregon, but that project was brought up with the idea of getting money from the government. The government sent an engineer out here and they then decided to put up seven bigdams, which would bring power development, more industries and more money into this part of the country. Also inland water transportation, irrigation and flood control. Here is what turned out a little later—you could build a dam high enough for flood control but then you would have to let the water out again. It cannot be used for power and be taken up entirely for flood control and inland water transportation. The proposed dam at Sweet Home of 147 feet will absolutely blot out this whole place, the town in which you live and the property. Maybe some of the people here prefer it. If that is so then the people should make their preference known, but we do think the cards should be thrown on the table. People should have the facts now in regard to flood control. It is said that in the Willamette Valley every year here is a damage of one and one-half million dollars from flood. This condition should be eliminated but there are lots of other ways to do this instead of blotting out the city.

The government has spent lots of money in this city and now should they spend money to destroy all that has been built? It is the same as taking \$180,000 out of one hand to build up the town with the idea of taking \$62,000,000 out of the other hand to destroy it. Let us keep this in mind. This area in which you live is one of the most beautiful in the state. You have the forests, the wonderful streams and mountains, and do you know what is the greatest industry, if I may call it an industry, in this area? The greatest attraction of people into Oregon from all parts of the country is for recreational purposes because they enjoy scenery

and the out-of-doors. The Secretary of the Highway Commission says that people coming in spend \$14,000 annually, which goes all over the state to people who have auto camps, grocery stores, etc., and the Highway Commissions spend \$100,000 a year advertising Oregon to bring people here and build up the attraction, therefore we must keep Oregon a beautiful place. A place where people can fish and camp. Now lets look toward building up this industry instead of other industries. I do not know whether it is the wish of the people to blot out this area or not. If it means more for the future of the citizens and people that is one thing—if it does not we should use our influence to see that the government does not destroy the area in which you live. No one has gone out into public to study this question from all angles and so I hope you will not consider this purely an idea of finding fault here or there, but we feel that this matter should be considered from different angles and see whether or not it is the right thing to blot this area out, stated Mr. Finley.