



John Kennedy, Stewart Udall, and New Frontier Conservation

Author(s): Thomas G. Smith

Source: *The Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 64, No. 3, (Aug., 1995), pp. 329-362

Published by: University of California Press

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3641005>

Accessed: 20/06/2008 22:40

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=ucal>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1995 to build trusted digital archives for scholarship. We work with the scholarly community to preserve their work and the materials they rely upon, and to build a common research platform that promotes the discovery and use of these resources. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

John Kennedy, Stewart Udall, and New Frontier Conservation

THOMAS G. SMITH

The author is a member of the history department at Nichols College, Dudley, Massachusetts.

In recent years scholars have produced significant studies of American conservation policy at the national level. The conservation activities of virtually every twentieth-century President have been examined, but the efforts of the John F. Kennedy administration have received little attention. An examination of the New Frontier record shows Kennedy and his principal advisor on conservation issues, Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall, trying to deal with a movement in flux. They sought to provide executive leadership for a traditional agenda—efficient resource use, public recreation, and the expansion of national parks—which had been neglected by Presidents Harry Truman and Dwight Eisenhower. At the same time, they confronted an emerging ecological outlook that stressed wilderness preservation, environmental protection, and the interdependence of all parts of the natural world. Generally, Kennedy and Udall were wedded to traditional conservation approaches inherited from the New Deal and groped slowly and ambivalently with the newer emphases of the environmental movement.¹

The author wishes to acknowledge the financial support of the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation and to thank James L. Conrad, Sandra L. Smith, Shannon Louise Sullivan, and the three referees of the *Pacific Historical Review* for their comments and suggestions.

1. Selected studies of federal conservation policy include J. Leonard Bates, "Fulfilling American Democracy: The Conservation Movement, 1907 to 1921," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLIV (1957), 29-57; Samuel P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959); Donald C. Swain, *Federal Conservation Policy, 1921-1933* (Berke-

From the turn of the century until World War II American conservation was driven by three imperatives: "efficiency, equity, and esthetics." During the early 1900s progressives, especially President Theodore Roosevelt and his chief of forestry Gifford Pinchot, championed the efficient use of natural resources. That utilitarian viewpoint held that experts in the federal bureaucracy could scientifically manage the public domain to eliminate waste. They also emphasized equity. Natural resources were the province of all the people and should not be plundered by special interests. Ideally, resources should be apportioned broadly and equitably. Conservation also had an esthetic thrust. Wild and scenic lands should be set aside, not for their intrinsic value, but to serve humankind. Protected areas would provide recreation, refresh the spirit, eliminate stress, and even transform "sissies" into virile outdoorsmen. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal expanded upon that tradition.²

World War II initiated a shift in conservation values which evolved into environmentalism by the late 1960s. The onset of

ley, 1963); Donald C. Swain, *Wilderness Defender: Horace M. Albright and Conservation* (Chicago, 1970); Kendrick A. Clements, "Herbert Hoover and Conservation, 1921-1933," *American Historical Review*, LXXXIX (1984), 67-88; Donald Worster, *The Dust Bowl: The Southern Plains in the 1930s* (New York, 1979); Clayton R. Koppes, "Environmental Policy and American Liberalism: The Department of Interior, 1933-1953," *Environmental Review*, VII (1983), 17-41; Elmo Richardson, *Dams, Parks and Politics: Resource Development and Preservation in the Truman-Eisenhower Era* (Lexington, Ky., 1973); Richard Allan Baker, *Conservation Politics: The Senate Career of Clinton P. Anderson* (Albuquerque, 1985); Martin V. Melosi, "Lyndon Johnson and Environmental Policy," in Robert Divine, ed., *The Johnson Years, Volume Two: Vietnam, The Environment and Science* (Lawrence, Kan., 1987), 113-149; Lewis L. Gould, *Lady Bird Johnson and the Environment* (Lawrence, Kan., 1988); John P. Crevelli, "The Final Act of the Greatest Conservation President," *Prologue*, XII (1980), 173-191.

Kennedy scholars have paid little attention to the New Frontier conservation program. See, for example, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston, 1965); Theodore Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York, 1965); Herbert Parmet, *JFK: The Presidency of John F. Kennedy* (New York, 1983); Irving Bernstein, *Promises Kept: John F. Kennedy's New Frontier* (New York, 1991).

2. Clayton Koppes, "Efficiency/Equity/Esthetics: Towards a Reinterpretation of American Conservation," *Environmental Review*, XI (1987), 127-146. For Theodore Roosevelt and Pinchot, see Paul Cutright, *Theodore Roosevelt: The Making of a Conservationist* (Urbana, Ill., 1986); Samuel P. Hays, "Gifford Pinchot and the American Conservation Movement," in Carroll W. Purcell, Jr., ed., *Technology in America: A History of Individuals and Ideas* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981), 151-162; Char Miller, "The Greening of Gifford Pinchot," *Environmental History Review*, XVI (1992), 1-20. For the early roots of the environmental movement, see Donald Fleming, "Roots of the New Conservation Movement," *Perspectives in American History*, VI (1972), 7-91; Wallace Stegner, "It All Began with Conservation," *Smithsonian*, XXI (April, 1990), 35-43.

the Cold War prompted politicians to develop natural resources in order to maintain a military and economic edge over the Soviet Union. At the same time, conservationists began to question resource policies which seemed to be more interested in the quantity of goods than the quality of life. The emergence of nuclear weapons demonstrated the fragility of humankind. Technology, if left unchecked, might endanger the human species. The population and tourism boom, the economic development of the American West, and the demand for natural resources to fuel the industrial-military complex threatened to stress the environment and to obliterate open space and wildlands. Conservationists began to reevaluate the relationship between humans and the environment. Increasingly, they were drawn to an ecological viewpoint which emphasized that humans were not masters of the environment but part of it. Conservationists reexamined the writings of John Muir, who had co-founded the Sierra Club and helped to establish Yosemite Park in the 1890s. He stressed the intrinsic value of nature and wilderness preservation. The ecological message of Aldo Leopold's *Sand County Almanac*, which appeared in 1949, urged people to cease viewing the land as a commodity and to practice earth stewardship. People belonged to the land, not vice versa. Conservationists also became better organized and more militant in their defense of the environment. The Sierra Club under "Muir reincarnate" David Brower became the chief political protagonist for preservation.³

3. For the shift in conservation values and tactics following World War II, see Koppes, "Efficiency/Equity/Esthetics," 141-145; Samuel P. Hays, "From Conservation to Environment: Environmental Politics in the United States since World War II," *Environmental Review*, VI (1982), 14-29; Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (3d ed., New Haven, 1982); Susan R. Schrepfer, *The Fight to Save the Redwoods: A History of Environmental Reform, 1917-1978* (Madison, 1978), 103-129, 161-170; Craig W. Allin, *The Politics of Wilderness Preservation* (Westport, Conn., 1982), 87-123; Stephen Fox, *Muir and His Legacy: The American Conservation Movement* (Boston, 1981), 250-290; Thomas G. Alexander, "Timber Management, Traditional Forestry, and Multiple-Use Stewardship: The Case of the Intermountain Region, 1950-85," *Journal of Forest History*, XXXIII (1989), 21-34; Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac* (New York, 1949); Susan L. Flader, *Thinking Like a Mountain: Aldo Leopold and the Evolution of an Ecological Attitude toward Deer, Wolves, and Forests* (Columbia, Mo., 1974); John McPhee, *Encounters with the Archdruid* (New York, 1971); Susan R. Schrepfer, "David R. Brower: Environmental Activist, Publicist, and Prophet" (Regional Oral History Office, Bancroft Library, Berkeley, 1980); Thomas R. Dunlap, "American Wildlife Policy and Environmental Ideology: Poisoning Coyotes, 1939-1972," *Pacific Historical Review*, LV (1986), 345-369.

In the 1950s the Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) proved a political rallying point for the nascent environmental movement. CRSP proposed a series of hydroelectric dams on the Colorado River. One of those dams, called Echo Park, would have flooded part of Dinosaur National Monument in western Colorado. David Brower and other conservationists mobilized opposition to the scheme on the grounds that it would flood scenic canyons and set a dangerous precedent by intruding upon a national monument. They also pointed out that a different Colorado River dam, constructed outside a nationally protected preserve, would serve the same purpose. Preservationists managed to defeat the Echo Park proposal, but in the process they lost Glen Canyon, one of the most spectacular sections of canyonland in the world. The monstrous Glen Canyon Dam plugged the Colorado River in northern Arizona and created a reservoir, Lake Powell, which stretched for 180 miles. Preservationists reluctantly agreed to support that project so long as the impounded water did not reach Rainbow National Monument. That promise was not kept. Never again would they sacrifice wilderness, especially free-flowing rivers, without a fight.⁴

John Kennedy was not actively involved in the conservation battles of the 1950s. Indeed, there is little in his background to suggest that, as President, he would take an interest in conservation. Certainly, he was no outdoorsman. "The trouble is, Jack," Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas once teased, "you've never slept on the ground." A friendly journalist, Ben Bradlee, observed that Kenneddy "was about the most urban—and urbane—man I have ever met. An outdoorsman he was not." JFK had little interest in hunting, hiking, camping, or wildlife observation. He enjoyed tennis, swimming, golf, and football, but a bad back and numerous other health problems limited his partic-

4. For the Echo Park and Glen Canyon controversies, see Wallace Stegner, ed., *This Is Dinosaur: Echo Park Country and Its Magic Rivers* (New York, 1955); Richardson, *Dams, Parks and Politics*, 54–70; Nash, *Wilderness*, 209–220; Owen Stratton and Phillip Sirotkin, *The Echo Park Controversy* (University, Ala., 1959); Russell Martin, *A Story That Stands Like a Dam: Glen Canyon and the Struggle for the Soul of the West* (New York, 1989); Philip Fradkin, *A River No More: The Colorado River and the West* (Tucson, 1981); Wallace Stegner, *The Sound of Mountain Water* (New York, 1980), 121–133; Mark W. T. Harvey, "Echo Park, Glen Canyon, and the Postwar Wilderness Movement," *Pacific Historical Review*, LX (1991), 43–67; Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness: Echo Park and the American Conservation Movement* (Albuquerque, 1994); Schrepfer, *Fight to Save the Redwoods*, 103–108.

ipation in those activities. His stays on the family retreats at Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and West Palm Beach, Florida, gave him an appreciation for the sea and sailing, but he never developed a love for the land. As a young man he once spent four months restoring his health on an Arizona cattle ranch. His encounter with ranch life, expansive skylines, and rugged landscapes seemed to make little impression. He told a friend that he felt at "home on the range," but he was referring to his success with women not his desert surroundings.⁵

As a member of Congress, Kennedy, like most Democratic liberals, endorsed the efficient utilization of natural resources and the preservation of scenic lands. He opposed efforts to promote tourism by building a tramway in Mount Rainier National Park. He favored legislation to regulate billboard signs along interstate highways. He supported Senator Hubert Humphrey's proposal to set aside millions of acres of public domain as wilderness. And he co-sponsored a bill to establish Cape Cod National Seashore.⁶

Kennedy gave only sporadic support to the construction of hydroelectric power projects. When public and private projects clashed, as they did over Dixon-Yates on the Tennessee River and Hell's Canyon on the Snake River, JFK favored federal development. But he was not enamored with dam building. Indeed, he was often linked with a congressional group, headed by Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois, which believed that the Interior Department's Bureau of Reclamation was overzealous in its plans to build dams. Kennedy opposed both the Echo Park and Glen Canyon projects.⁷

5. William O. Douglas, Oral History Interview, John F. Kennedy Library, 37 (hereafter OH and JFKL); Ben Bradlee, *Conversations with Kennedy* (New York, 1975), 212. For Kennedy's recreational activities, see Ralph Horton, OH, JFKL, 2-4, 9-16, 41-42; William Lawrence, OH, JFKL, 26-27; James Reed, OH, JFKL, 73-74; Wilton Vaughn, OH, JFKL, 3-4, 16-17; Thomas C. Reeves, *A Question of Character: A Life of John F. Kennedy* (New York, 1991), 35-45. For JFK's visit to Arizona, see Nigel Hamilton, *JFK: Reckless Youth* (New York, 1992), 153-158.

6. Lee White, legislative assistant to JFK, to Dr. Bradford Cannon, Nov. 9, 1956, JFK to Glenn W. Stevens, Jan. 5, 1957, JFK to Herbert I. Harris, April 4, 1957, box 664, JFK to Hubert Humphrey, May 10, 1958, box 688, JFK to Howard Zahniser, Sept. 20, 1960, box 731, Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL. For Kennedy's involvement in the establishment of Cape Cod National Seashore, see boxes 663, 713, 754, 755, 756 in *ibid.*

7. JFK to Hope Stokes, May 27, 1957, box 664, JFK to Stephen L.R. McNichols, Dec. 9, 1959, box 725, Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL; *Congr. Rec.*, 84 Cong., 1 sess. (April 20, 1955) 4812.

During the presidential campaign of 1960, Kennedy appointed a committee to advise him on conservation issues. That committee recommended resource development, preservation, and equitable distribution. "I get it," JFK quipped, "we're for everything." Campaigning in western states he pushed resource use. In Alaska, for example, he came out for Rampart Dam, a proposed hydroelectric facility on the Yukon River which would have flooded an area of wildlife habitat with a reservoir larger than Lake Erie. He criticized the no-new starts policy of the Eisenhower administration which left water and power development to private initiative. In eight "arid" years, JFK reminded voters, austerity-prone Republicans had failed to generate any new programs for resource development. Nor had they taken steps to prevent the despoilment of the environment by special interests. Eisenhower, Kennedy pointed out, had vetoed a water pollution control bill on the grounds that pollution was a local not a federal concern. A Democratic administration, he promised, would establish a conservation program which would promote the wise use of resources, preserve scenic areas, and assume federal responsibility for the environment.⁸

Once elected, Kennedy named Stewart Udall Secretary of the Interior. The forty-one-year-old Democrat from St. Johns, Arizona, had served three terms in the U.S. House of Representatives prior to his appointment to the Cabinet. In Congress, Udall had enjoyed only a casual relationship with Kennedy, but he was impressed with JFK's intellect and ability. He became an early supporter of Kennedy's bid for the presidential nomination and delivered Arizona's seventeen delegate votes. Grateful, Kennedy rewarded Udall with the interior secretaryship, which typically went to a westerner.⁹

Growing up in a small Arizona town founded by his Mormon forbears, Udall developed a love for the land and a zest for

8. "Kennedy-Johnson Natural Resources Advisory Committee Report," Jan. 17, 1961, box 12, Pierre Salinger Papers, JFKL; Frank Smith, *Congressman from Mississippi* (New York, 1964), 224; JFK, speeches, Helena, Mont., June 27, Anchorage, Alaska, Sept. 3, 1960, box 910, Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL; Richard Goodwin, memorandum for Senator John F. Kennedy, Nov. 23, 1960, box 30, President's Office Files (POF), JFKL; JFK to Senator Frank Moss, Oct. 28, 1960, box 70, Moss Papers, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

9. Stewart L. Udall, OH, JFKL, 3-5, 9-10, 19-21; Lee White, OH #4, JFKL, 9.

the outdoors. He often went hiking, fishing, camping, and mountain climbing. In many ways, Udall embodied the image of the youthful, athletic, vigorous New Frontiersman.¹⁰

As a member of the House Interior Committee, Udall had been doctrinaire in his support of federal reclamation. In the 1950s he vigorously supported the construction of Echo Park dam and denounced the "rising tide of antireclamation sentiment...which threatens western development." He had complete faith in the recommendations and engineering designs of the Bureau of Reclamation. He championed the construction of Glen Canyon Dam even though it would flood magnificent gorges and intrude upon Rainbow Bridge National Monument.¹¹

Udall also supported esthetic conservation, especially if protected areas were outside Arizona. Increasingly, he was attracted by the preservationist pleas of Brower of the Sierra Club, Howard Zahniser of the Wilderness Society, and Ira Gabrielson of the Wildlife Management Institute. He also enjoyed the works of Henry Thoreau and Robert Frost which examined man's relationship with nature. In spite of Udall's penchant for dam-building, conservation groups generally favored his appointment.¹²

Ambitious, opportunistic, and energetic, Udall was determined to become an accomplished Interior Secretary like Harold Ickes under FDR. He realized that in the past the conservation movement had been driven, in large measure, by wealthy, white easterners. Both Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, the two Presidents who had made the greatest contributions to conservation, had come from New York. Kennedy was another eastern elitist dedicated to the public interest. Given the proper focus, Udall

10. C. E. Gillham, "Meet Mr. Secretary of the Interior," *Field & Stream*, LXV (April 1961), 43, 99; Robert Manning, "Secretary of Things in General," *Saturday Evening Post*, CCXXXIV (May 20, 1961), 38-39ff.

11. Udall, interview with author, Aug. 21, 1986; Stewart L. Udall, "The Great Debate on Reclamation" *Cong. Rec.*, 84 Cong., 1 sess. (March 30, 1955), 4111; Martin, *A River*, 72-74.

12. Udall, interview with author, Aug. 21, 1986; Schrepfer, "David Brower," OH, 145. A former House colleague, Frank Smith, considered Udall's appointment JFK's most valuable contribution to conservation. Frank Smith, *The Politics of Conservation* (New York, 1966), 292. Brower has said that Udall's "ecological conscience has not been matched in that office." David Brower, *For Earth's Sake: The Life and Times of David Brower* (Salt Lake City, 1990), 233.

believed, Kennedy might be able to match or exceed the conservation record of the two Roosevelts. JFK shared that goal.¹³

Udall proposed a conservation agenda which included the efficiency and esthetic viewpoints. The most pressing conservation goal of the 1960s, he contended, was to preserve the continent's beauty and spaciousness. The Truman and Eisenhower administrations, he charged, had added less than 100,000 acres to national park preserves. The new administration, he pledged, would create more open space, especially in urban areas, provide more public recreation, and expand the national park system. And in the tradition of the New Deal, it would aggressively pursue the development of water and power resources. Besides that traditional agenda, Udall gave a nod to the growing environmental perspective by recommending the preservation of wilderness.¹⁴

At the first Cabinet meeting in early January 1961, Udall recommended the establishment of a comprehensive and sustained conservation program "worthy of the two Roosevelts." Kennedy proved receptive and asked Udall to work with Ted Sorensen and Lee White of the White House staff on specific recommendations. Kennedy spelled out the ambitious program in a special message to Congress in late February. America's expanding population, expected to reach 300 million by century's end, demanded additional recreation areas and national parks. He specifically recommended the protection of seashores at Cape Cod, Point Reyes, California, and Padre Island, Texas. He also pledged federal support for desalinization plants and multipurpose dams.

At the same time, Kennedy demonstrated his concern for esthetic conservation. He promised additional funds to combat air and water pollution. And he became the first President to advocate wilderness protection by recommending congressional

13. Udall, "Washington Conversation," typescript, CBS Television Broadcast, March 12, 1961, box 90, Stewart L. Udall Papers, University of Arizona Library, Tucson (hereafter UP); Frank Holeman in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Feb. 27, 1961. For Kennedy's admiration for the conservation efforts of the two Roosevelt Presidents, see "Remarks of Senator John F. Kennedy," Shrine Auditorium, Billings, Mont., Sept. 22, 1960, box 911, Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL; Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 605.

14. Julius Duschka in *Washington Post*, Feb. 14, 15, 1961; R.G. Lynch in *Milwaukee Journal*, Jan. 29, 1961; Louis Cassels in *Deseret News*, May 13, 1961.

approval of the Wilderness Bill which sought to set aside about fourteen million acres of remote, unspoiled public domain.¹⁵

Udall also pushed esthetic conservation. In early April he attended the seventh biennial wilderness conference sponsored by the Sierra Club in San Francisco. There he championed wilderness protection and emphasized the importance of developing an ecological conscience. He read verbatim a "wonderful and poetic statement" on wilderness written by Wallace Stegner, a respected novelist, historian, and conservationist. Preserving wilderness, Stegner argued, would help remind individuals that they were part of the natural order and not masters of it. It also was "the challenge against which our character as a people was formed," Stegner wrote. "The reminder and the reassurance that it is still there is good for our spiritual health even if we never once in ten years set foot in it." Wilderness had value "simply as an idea." At that conference, Udall promised the Sierra Club that he would support the creation of a Redwoods National Park in California.¹⁶

Despite their support for environmental protection and wilderness preservation, Kennedy and Udall adhered to a traditional agenda which emphasized the efficient use of natural resources. To preserve natural grandeur and promote recreation, Udall gave high priority to the enlargement of the national park system. The Cape Cod Seashore Bill, first introduced by then Senator John Kennedy and his Massachusetts colleague Leverett Saltonstall in 1959, drew his immediate and energetic support. Testifying before the House Subcommittee on National Parks, he urged his former colleagues to "preserve this relatively small segment of Cape Cod" before it was too late. He pointed out that such "pioneering legislation" would serve as a model for the protection of such other shorelines as those at Point Reyes, Padre

15. Udall, interview with author, Aug. 21, 1986; John F. Kennedy, "Special Message to the Congress on Natural Resources," Feb. 23, 1961, "Remarks at the Dedication of the National Wildlife Federation Building," March 3, 1961, *Public Papers of the Presidents 1961* (Washington, D.C., 1962), 114-121, 147-148 (hereafter *PP*, year, pages).

16. David Brower, ed., *Wilderness: America's Living Heritage* (San Francisco, 1961), 91-106; Brower, *For Earth's Sake*, 209. For Udall's efforts on behalf of Redwoods National Park, see Schrepfer, *Fight to Save the Redwoods*, 130-139.

Island, Indiana Dunes on Lake Michigan, and Oregon Dunes on the Pacific Ocean.¹⁷

Udall also supported the establishment of new national parks at Rainbow Bridge in Arizona, Canyonlands in Utah, and Prairie View in Kansas. To build public support, he took highly publicized inspection tours to those proposed preserves. At Prairie View, he received more publicity than he bargained for when a Kansas farmer, armed with a shotgun, drove him off his property.¹⁸

The Canyonlands park proposal offended some preservationists because it allowed grazing and mining. Wilderness advocates also were cool toward Udall's proposal to expand the boundaries of Rainbow Bridge. Enlarging the protected area and granting it park status was, they believed, an attempt to silence those who sought protection of the monument from the impounded waters of Glen Canyon Dam. During the 1950s preservationists had withdrawn their objections to the Glen Canyon project only when they were assured that Rainbow Bridge would not be threatened. Some advocated the construction of a barrier dam to protect the monument, but Congress refused to act. Udall argued, probably correctly, that a diversion dam would mar the grandeur of "the most magnificent piece of sculpture in the world." He preferred to allow the waters to lap the monument's abutments than to build an unsightly dam. Udall's do-nothing policy enraged preservationists. "If Rainbow is not protected," wrote David Brower, "it is not your subordinates who will be responsible. It is you. You, Secretary Stewart L. Udall, the man who dared to have a dream that others hadn't the courage or boldness to dream. And President John Kennedy, who you let think your dream was worth dreaming. Don't let him down. Don't let yourself down. Nor us." Udall and Congress failed to act and Rainbow Bridge was transformed forever.¹⁹

17. Udall, Report to the President, Feb. 24, March 7, 1961, box 88, UP; Udall to JFK, May 5, 1961, box 79a, POE, JFKL; Udall, OH, JFKL; 105-106; Undersecretary of the Interior John Carver, OH, JFKL, 18; Francis P. Burling, *The Birth of the Cape Cod National Seashore* (Plymouth, Mass., 1978), 47; Stewart Udall, "We Must Act Now for More National Parks," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, XLVI (March 1961), 4-5; Udall, "We Need Distance in Our Eyes," *Life*, LI (Dec. 22, 1961), 135-136.

18. Udall, Report to the President, May 2, 23, July 11, 1961, box 88, UP; Udall, "A Report to the President on a Proposal for a Kennedy Administration Parks Conservation Program," June 20, 1961, *ibid*; *Washington Post*, Dec. 5, 1961.

19. For the Canyonlands controversy, see Thomas G. Smith, "The Canyonlands

In its first year, the New Frontier achieved modest conservation gains. Congress initiated a program to acquire additional wetlands, strengthened the Water Pollution Control Act, and appropriated \$75 million for saline water research. It also created Cape Cod National Seashore, the first national preserve to be acquired exclusively with federal money. That preserve of 26,670 acres, Udall boasted, surpassed by 7,000 acres the total amount of land added to the national park system by the Eisenhower administration. Actually, Udall misrepresented the contributions of the Eisenhower administration because his figures covered only national parklands. In December 1960 Udall's predecessor, Fred Seaton, preserved nine million acres in Alaska as the Arctic National Wildlife Range. Indeed, Udall considered undoing that bold executive action, but he demurred for fear of alienating preservationists.²⁰

Udall was encouraged, but hardly satisfied, with the conservation achievements during the first year of the New Frontier. After all, the administration had faced major civil rights and foreign policy crises. "The president is imprisoned by Berlin," Udall once complained. Undaunted, in November 1961 he recommended to Kennedy "a national conservation effort more significant—and more successful—than any similar program begun by either of the Roosevelt Presidents."²¹ Working with

National Park Controversy, 1961–1964," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, LIX (1991), 216–242. For the reaction of conservation groups to the threat posed to Rainbow Bridge, see "Rainbow Bridge Protection Not Provided," *Living Wilderness*, XXVI (Summer–Fall 1961), 41; "Rainbow's Day in Court," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, XLVII (Dec. 1962), 83–93; editorials in *National Parks Magazine*, XXXV (May 1961), 2, (June 1961), 2, 16, XXXVII (March 1963), 2, (May 1963), 2, 19; Udall, Report to the President, May 2, 1961, box 88, UP; Martin, *A Story*, 9–10, 216–240. Quotes are from *ibid.*, 225, 233.

20. Orren Beaty, Report to the President, July 6, 1961, box 88, UP; Udall, memorandum for Ted Sorensen, Sept. 13, 1961, box 88, UP; Schrepfer, *Fight to Save the Redwoods*, 116; "Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton Creates Arctic and Two Other National Wildlife Ranges in Alaska," *National Parks Magazine*, XXXVI (Jan. 1961), 17, and editorial in *ibid.* (March 1961), 2; Brower, *For Earth's Sake*, 451; Senator E.L. Bartlett, confidential office memoranda, June 28, July 25, 1961, box 3, Bartlett Papers, University of Alaska Library, Fairbanks; George Sundborg, confidential memorandum to Senator Ernest Gruening, July 24, 1961, box 1, Gruening Papers, University of Alaska Library, Fairbanks. Udall's refusal to transfer the wildlife range to the state of Alaska and his waning support for Rampart dam prompted Gruening to seek his removal from office. Gruening, memorandum #1 to President John F. Kennedy, n.d., but Nov. 1963, box 21, *ibid.*

21. Schlesinger, *Thousand Days*, 363; Udall, Report to the President, Nov. 28, 1961, box 88, UP.

Agriculture Secretary Orville Freeman, Sorensen, and White, Udall produced an ambitious conservation agenda. Much of that program was extracted from a pre-published report of the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission (ORRRC). Created by Congress in 1958, that study group recommended a major commitment to outdoor recreation. Using the ORRRC's recommendations as a "springboard," the administration championed wilderness protection and the creation of additional shoreline preserves and national parks. It proposed a revenue scheme, the land conservation fund, which called for an assortment of recreation user fees to finance the acquisition of additional forestland and wildlife refuges. It recommended the creation of a Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, within the Interior Department, to coordinate federal-state recreation activities. And like Theodore Roosevelt fifty years earlier, it would call national attention to efficient resource use and preservation by holding a White House Conference on Conservation. Reaching only two-thirds of those goals during the first term, Udall enthused, would *"easily be the high-water mark for conservation in the history of this country."*²²

Kennedy announced the ambitious program in a special message to Congress on March 1, 1962. He considered wilderness preservation a central feature and recommended that it be given "priority attention." Udall, too, stressed the primacy of wilderness protection. "The concept of wilderness that has been cherished by Americans is the idea of lands where man and his works do not dominate the landscape, where the earth and its whole community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." The positive press reaction to the President's conservation address prompted Udall to gush to Kennedy: "We have our marching orders and we are confident that the country will march with us on this program."

22. *Ibid.* (emphasis in the original). See also Udall, Report to the President, Aug. 29, Sept. 12, Dec. 5, 1961, box 88, UP; Jan. 23, Feb. 20, 1962, box 98, UP; Udall, "A Report to the President on a Kennedy Conservation Program for the 1960's," (quotation) undated, box 35, Theodore Sorensen Papers, JFKL; Orren Beaty, memorandum for Lee White, "Preliminary Statement on Plans and Programs Responsive to the President's Special Message on Natural Resources," Nov. 29, 1961, box 19, Lee White Papers, JFKL.

The 1960s, he predicted, would be the "greatest decade in conservation history."²³

On May 24–25, just a few weeks after his special message, Kennedy hosted a Conservation Conference at the White House. The first in fifty years, the conference brought together Cabinet officials, members of Congress, governors, and the leaders of conservation organizations. While the emerging environmental viewpoint was represented, especially by Pennsylvania Congressman John Saylor who championed the Wilderness Bill, the emphasis of the program was on wise use. Representative Wayne Aspinall of Colorado, chairman of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, criticized preservationists who sought to establish "mausoleum-like museums in which people can go see resources that cannot be utilized." In a keynote address, Udall stressed giving "new vigor to traditional programs." Those programs "of Rooseveltian proportions" had been detailed weeks earlier in Kennedy's special message.²⁴

The conference concluded with an address by the President. JFK concentrated on the utilitarian side of conservation, urging the application of science to get oil from shale, to extract food sources from the ocean, to convert salt water to fresh water, to irrigate the world's deserts. He acknowledged the esthetic impulse by stating that there could be no more worthy goal for an administration than "to preserve this land and maintain its beauty." To dramatize that point he told the story of the Frenchman who instructed his gardener to plant a tree. The gardener pointed out that the tree would not blossom for a hundred years. "In that case," he admonished, "plant it this afternoon."²⁵

23. *PP*, 1962, 176–184; Stewart L. Udall, "Wilderness," *Living Wilderness*, XXVII (Spring–Summer 1962), 3–7; editorial, *NYT*, March 3, 1962; Paul Mason Tilden, "Washington Newsletter," *Natural History*, LXXI (June 1962), 66–67; Udall, Report to the President, March 6, May 15, 1962, box 98, UP; Department of Interior, press release, "Greatest Decade in Conservation History Predicted by Udall," March 9, 1962, box 99, Wayne Aspinall Papers, University of Denver. Udall helped draft the special message, see box 100, UP.

24. Charles E. Randall, "White House Conference on Conservation," *Journal of Forestry*, LX (1962), 457–458; address by Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall at the White House Conference on Conservation, May 24, 1962, box 79a, POF, JFKL.

25. *PP*, 1962, 441–443.

Despite the President's support for the conservation program, Udall sometimes wondered if the commitment was heartfelt. "Intellectually he is fine," Udall told Arthur Schlesinger, special assistant to the President. "He knows the issues and recognizes their importance. When the problems are brought to him, his response is excellent. But he doesn't raise them himself." Udall believed that JFK, unlike either Roosevelt, was not making sufficient use of the office as a conservation pulpit.²⁶

Kennedy's cautious approach toward conservation reflected his presidential style. He often promised new approaches to domestic problems, but he rarely moved boldly. Conservative Democrats in Congress had to be carefully nurtured. Environmentalists were disturbed by a New Frontier mentality which advocated the conquest of wilderness. At the same time, development-minded western congressmen, especially Wayne Aspinall, were skeptical of any programs, such as the Wilderness Bill, that would "lock up" resources. Within the bureaucracy, the Agriculture Department's Forestry Service and the Interior Department's National Park Service had traditionally feuded over conservation policy. Within the Interior Department, Udall often was at loggerheads with Conrad Wirth, the long-time director of the Park Service. Udall considered the Park Service too independent and lily-white. Out of 474 rangers, the Park Service employed only one African-American. Sometimes called the "J. Edgar Hoover of the Interior Department," Wirth resented Udall's interference in park matters.²⁷

Conservation activities also progressed slowly because it took time for the Washington political community to develop faith in Udall's ability. In 1961 his gaffes sometimes embarrassed the administration. When he blamed the Bay of Pigs invasion on Eisenhower, JFK took him to task. When he confused the nations of India and Pakistan, Kennedy quipped: "That's why I appointed him Secretary of the *Interior*." Udall offended Aspinall by not alerting him to forthcoming conservation proposals. Presidential assistant Lee White started to record Udall's miscues on a legal pad but gave up when the list became extensive. Udall's "in-

26. Schlesinger, *Thousand Days*, 606.

27. John Carver, OH, #2, pp. 19, 58-59, OH #3, pp.35-36; Udall, Report to the President, April 3, 1962, box 98, UP.

formal, almost slapstick" style offended some White House bureaucrats. Working with Udall, Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman noted privately, draws "into sharp focus the fact that good-hearted, energetic, knowledgeable, and able as he is in many ways, he is the least mature and effective member of the Cabinet."²⁸

Udall adopted several different approaches to building Kennedy's enthusiasm for conservation. First, he boosted the conservation idea in regular reports to the President. JFK, to Udall's regret, rarely convened his Cabinet and relied primarily on his staff for counsel. Udall mainly had to use the written word to push his recommendations. Second, he related conservation to foreign policy, JFK's primary area of interest. The United States could win favor in Third World nations by exporting its reclamation know-how and assisting them in resource development projects. The Cold War, too, made it essential for the United States to maintain its edge over the Soviet Union in the production of hydroelectric and atomic power. Third, he repeatedly linked conservation to politics. If they pushed conservation, Democrats might make significant gains in the American West. In the 1960 campaign, JFK had won only four western states: Hawaii, Minnesota, Nevada, and New Mexico. That lack of support disturbed the President. When Udall informed him that the Interior Department wanted to establish Prairie View National Park, Kennedy responded: "Why the hell do you want to do anything in Kansas? I mean what have they done for us?" Still, Udall was convinced that the conservation program would pay political dividends. "The West was the 'goat' of the Presidential campaign last fall," he conceded. But with industry and careful organization, it could "play the 'star' role in next year's campaign."²⁹

A presidential visit to the West, Udall believed, would heighten public interest in conservation, enhance JFK's chances for political success in that region in 1964, and possibly gain as

28. Tucson *Daily Citizen*, April 26, 1961; Carver, OH, #2, pp. 39–40, OH #9, p. 152; Lee White, memorandum for the President, July 1, 1961, box 1, Larry O'Brien Papers, JFKL; Lee White, OH, #4, p. 17; Orville Freeman, diary, microfilm edition, n.d., but sometime in 1963, JFKL.

29. Udall, OH, 27, 63–64, 69, 86; Udall, Report to the President, May 2, June 13, Aug. 29, Sept. 19, Dec. 5, 1961, box 88, UP.

many as fifteen House seats for western Democrats in the upcoming congressional election. An opportunist, Udall also may have seen the trip as a chance to develop a closer personal relationship with JFK.³⁰

Kennedy committed himself to the trip at the White House Conference on Conservation. "I don't know that I'll enjoy it," he told Udall, "but I'll go." The "non-political" trip took the President to South Dakota, Colorado, and California in mid-August. "This is a non-partisan trip," Kennedy quipped. "I'm not going to a single state I carried in 1960." Accompanied by Udall and several presidential assistants, JFK commemorated the completion of the Oahe hydroelectric dam in South Dakota and the commencement of multipurpose water projects in Colorado (Fryingpan-Arkansas) and California (San Luis Reservoir). The New Frontier, Kennedy claimed in his dedication speeches, would carry on the New Deal tradition of regional planning and public power. Making the connection with the New Deal and emphasizing federal resource development would curry political favor with westerners and perhaps win their support for the new conservation program. Dam construction, Udall recalled later, "still had some magic then."³¹

In between dedicating dams, delivering speeches, and mingling with Democratic politicians, Kennedy visited Yosemite National Park in California. Arriving late in the afternoon on August 17, he stayed at the elegant Ahwahnee Hotel. After dining on pre-boned, "caught-in-the-park" rainbow trout, the President

30. Udall, Report to the President, Sept. 19, Dec. 5, 1961, box 88, April 17, May 15, June 12, 1962, box 98, UP; Udall to Robert F. Kennedy, May 16, 1962, box 98, UP; Robert F. Kennedy to Udall, undated, box 106, UP; Arthur Schlesinger to Udall, April 9, 1962, UP; Udall to JFK, May 31, 1962, Theodore Sorensen Papers, box 35, JFKL; Udall, "The West and the Congressional Elections: House Prospects," undated memorandum, box 981, POF.

31. Udall, handwritten memorandum, "JFK's Western Trip Aug 17-20: Written enroute to Denver Sept 14," box 112, UP (hereafter Udall, Journal, Western Trip); *PP*, 1962, 621-630; Udall, memorandum to Kenneth O'Donnell, July 31, 1962, box 981, POF; Department of Interior, *Trip of the President, August 17-18 1962*, briefing book, *ibid.*; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, *Oahe Dam and Reservoir: Construction History and Status, August 1, 1962*, box 981, POF; Oahe Fact Sheet, Aug. 1962, box 71, Sorensen Papers; James K. Carr, memorandum to Pierre Salinger, "Background Information on Fryingpan-Arkansas Project," Aug. 6, 1962, box 981, POF; memorandum, "Fryingpan-Arkansas Project," Aug. 16, 1962, box 71, Sorensen Papers; Udall, OH, 110.

adjourned to the hotel balcony to witness the renowned firefall. A sixty-year-old tradition, discontinued in 1968 for environmental reasons, the firefall was created when park rangers hurled a batch of embers off a 3,214 foot cliff at Glacier Point. They still glowed brightly a third of the way down. During the firefall, Kennedy was serenaded by a quartet singing "Indian Love Call." The following morning JFK toured the park by car and helicopter.³²

Kennedy seemed impressed by Yosemite. He told Udall that he would consider another trip in 1963 and might vacation in the West. Still, Udall had some doubts about JFK's commitment to conservation. "He lacks the conservation-preservation insights of FDR & TR, and it will take some work to sharpen his thinking & interest," Udall confided to his journal. Kennedy showed no interest in hiking and refused Udall's invitation to deliver a literal fireside chat to the park's campground guests. But even had Kennedy been inclined, the Secret Service would have opposed exposing the President in such a wide-open environment.³³

Overall, the tour put Udall in a gleeful mood. "A good trip—good for the country, an eye-opener for the Pres—a master stroke for us and our conservation program," he wrote privately. "Best thing, from my view, was that the Pres & press have started making the golden word—conservation—part of our common dialogue again. We may succeed in our revival yet." From a political and conservation standpoint, Udall wrote JFK upon their return to Washington, the western tour "was an overwhelming success." He recommended making the journey an annual event.³⁴

Despite its perceived success, the trip seemed to have little impact on western political races. In gubernatorial contests, Edmund G. "Pat" Brown defeated Richard Nixon in California, but Steve McNichols lost to John Love in Colorado and Ralph

32. Memorandum, "Yosemite National Park Itinerary," Aug. 17, 1962, box 981, POF; Udall to Ken O'Donnell, undated, *ibid.*; *San Francisco Chronicle*, Aug. 18, 1962; *Yosemite Sentinel*, Aug. 24, 1962; Sander Vanocur, "Kennedy's Voyage of Discovery," *Harper's Magazine*, CCXXVIII (April 1964), 42.

33. Udall, Journal, Western Trip, box 112, UP; Ray Gibson to JFK, Aug. 15, 1962, box 981, POF.

34. Udall, Report to the President, Aug. 28, 1962, box 98, UP; Udall, Journal, Western Trip, box 112, UP.

Herseth lost to Archie Gubbrud in South Dakota. "What a stiff," Kennedy said of Gubbrud. "How can anyone like that be elected to anything?" In Senate contests, George McGovern won in South Dakota, but John Carroll lost in Colorado. In the House, Democrats captured more than a dozen seats in the West, but those gains came mainly in California.³⁵

The trip gave considerable publicity to the subject of conservation but had little effect on specific legislation. As promised in the special message on conservation, Kennedy established the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. And Congress, led by Clinton Anderson of New Mexico, chairman of the Senate Interior Committee, approved major reclamation projects in Colorado (Fryingpan-Arkansas) and New Mexico (San Juan Chama-Navajo). It also created two new national seashores at Point Reyes and Padre Island. Unhappily for the administration, Congress failed to reach agreement on additional seashore and parklands proposals at Indiana Dunes, Oregon Dunes, and Canyonlands. Congress also refused to enact the land conservation fund. And glad-handing with Aspinall in Colorado was not enough to win his support for the Senate version of the Wilderness Bill. Aspinall told Udall that the administration would get a bill "even though you might not recognize it." Aspinall wanted a measure which would permit some lumbering, mining, and grazing. The bill which emerged from the House Interior Committee in mid-August, Udall complained to Kennedy, contained "so many anti-conservation measures that it would have to be vetoed were it to pass."³⁶

Although the Wilderness Bill was "in deep (Aspinall) trouble," Udall had hopes for 1963. To realize those hopes, he engaged in boosterism. He lauded the "conservation crusade" of the Scripps-Howard press. He praised House and Senate leaders, especially Anderson and Aspinall, for their commitment to con-

35. *Ibid.*; Congressional Quarterly, Inc., *Guide to U.S. Elections* (Washington, D.C., 1975), 400-401, 430, 487-509, 846-849.

36. Udall, Report to the President, July 24, Oct. 2, 1962, box 98, UP; Udall to Sorensen, "Summary of Major Conservation Accomplishments of the 87th Congress and the Kennedy Administration," undated memorandum, box 35, Sorensen Papers; Orren Beaty, assistant to the secretary of the interior, to Larry O'Brien, Sept. 28, 1962, microfilm, Beaty Papers, JFKL; Udall to David Brower, Sept. 21, 1962, box 190, UP; B[eaty] to Udall, June 19, 1962, Udall, Report to the President, Aug. 15, 1962, box 98, UP.

servation. (The praise for Aspinall was hardly sincere.) And he scolded departmental personnel when they failed to take advantage of opportunities to praise the administration's conservation program. When Conrad Wirth fell short of the mark in a magazine interview, Udall took him to task. "Any reader would inspect this article in vain for evidence that you are aware of any ties to this Administration, or that you have any serious interest in the new programs which it has presented to the Congress and the American people. If this article reveals your true state of mind, I would suggest that you get aboard—QUICK." A few months later, Assistant Secretary of the Interior James Carver publicly accused the Park Service of having the mentality of a religious cult. Too often it failed to realize that it was not an autonomous agency but subordinate to Congress and the Interior Department. It remained hostile to the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation even though that agency had been created by Congress at the President's request. Its unwavering commitment to park ideals had the "mystic, quasi-religious sound of a manual for the Hitler Youth Movement." A few days after Carver's speech, Wirth resigned and was replaced by George Hartzog.³⁷

Udall also advanced the cause through human interest stories. In December 1962 the press learned about Scott Turner, a seven-year-old boy who had written the President to complain about the disappearance of open space. "We have no place to go when we want to go out in the Canyon Because there ar going to build houses So could you set aside some land where we could play? Thank you four listening." Udall informed the boy that he shared "the same sense of loss" and pledged to use every effort to preserve open spaces.³⁸

By 1962 increasing numbers of Americans were demanding additional wildlands and a clean environment. Aggressively pursuing preservation and the "greening of America," groups such as

37. Udall, Report to the President, Oct. 2, 1962, box 98, Jan. 15, 1963, box 108, UP; Udall to Walker Stone, editor, Scripps Howard Press, March 18, 1963, box 153, UP; Udall to Wayne Aspinall, Dec. 14, 1962, Udall to Clinton Anderson, Dec. 14, 1962, Udall to Conrad Wirth, Aug. 15, 1962, box 98, UP; John Carver, "Remarks By Assistant Secretary of the Interior John A. Carver, Jr., At the National Park Service Conference of Challenges, Yosemite National Park, October 14, 1963," box 1, John Carver Papers, JFKL.

38. Scott Turner to JFK, undated, Scott Turner to Udall, Dec. 10, 1962, and unidentified, undated newsclips, box 98, UP.

the Sierra Club, Wilderness Society, and Audubon Society gained in size and influence. The publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* gave a sense of urgency to environmental protection by pointing out the potential health hazards of indiscriminate pesticide use. People must act as "custodians and not owners of the earth," she reminded Udall.³⁹

The Kennedy administration gave heed to the emerging environmental movement. Privately, Agriculture Secretary Freeman denounced the "inflammatory" message of *Silent Spring*, but Udall praised the book and its author. Kennedy appointed a scientific commission to study the effects of pesticide use. That panel's findings, reported in 1963, basically substantiated the claims of Carson.⁴⁰

Kennedy and Udall also nurtured preservationists. At Udall's suggestion, the President invited twelve conservation groups to the White House Rose Garden to honor the contributions of Clinton Anderson who had recently stepped down as chairman of the Senate Interior Committee. Again that evening more than 600 conservationists honored Anderson at the Statler-Hilton Hotel. During his tribute, Udall asked the audience to remember the ecological message of Aldo Leopold that "we abuse the land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."⁴¹

Udall gained further publicity for the cause of conservation with the publication of *The Quiet Crisis*. That well-received volume, prepared with the assistance of Wallace Stegner and other departmental staff members, traced the history of the American conservation movement and set an agenda for the future. For three centuries American settlers had seized, exploited, and abused nature. An abundance of natural resources had provided

39. Schrepfer, *Fight to Save the Redwoods*, 161–166; Fox, *American Conservation Movement*, 250–290; Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (Boston, 1962); Rachel Carson to Udall, Nov. 12, 1963, box 190, UP.

40. Freeman, diary, May 23, 1963; Frank Graham, Jr., *Since Silent Spring* (Boston, 1970), 52, 187, 198–200; President's Science Advisory Committee, Report on the Use of Pesticides, May 14, 1963, box 87, POF.

41. *PP* 1963, 414; *Cong. Rec.*, 88 Cong., 1 sess. (June 13, 1963) 10771; "Senator Anderson Honored," *Living Wilderness*, XXVIII (Spring–Summer 1963), 25–28; Baker, *Conservation Politics*, 206; program, Conservation Testimonial Dinner for the Honorable Clinton P. Anderson, box 15, POF.

economic opportunity and a tradition of wastefulness. Not until the turn of the twentieth century did Americans undertake a concerted program of earth stewardship. Udall especially praised the efforts of Gifford Pinchot, who advocated the efficient use of resources, and John Muir, who emphasized the preservation of wild and scenic lands. The Kennedy administration, he pledged, would seek to balance those two traditional goals of efficiency and esthetics in its conservation agenda.⁴²

The Quiet Crisis also gave additional impetus to the nascent environmental movement. "America today stands poised on a pinnacle of wealth and power," Udall wrote, "yet we live in a land of vanishing beauty, of increasing ugliness, of shrinking open space, and of an overall environment that is diminished daily by pollution and noise and blight. This, in brief, is the quiet crisis." President Kennedy contributed an introduction to the book which warned that unchecked technology might clutter and contaminate the environment, disrupt the balance of nature, and endanger the lives of humans and wildlife. The crisis, he declared, was not only quiet, but urgent. Americans must take steps, he declared, to improve the quality of life by protecting the environment.⁴³

For the 88th congressional session of 1963, the Wilderness Bill and the land and water conservation fund measure were the administration's priority items. Owing to Aspinall's intransigence, Udall did not realistically expect the Wilderness Bill to be enacted until 1964. Generally, Aspinall was upset because too many key conservation measures were being sent to his committee. He also resented being labeled anti-wilderness by the press. Specifically, he had no objection to the preservation of approximately eight million acres of land already designated "wild" by the Forest Service. He balked, however, at a provision of the bill which would permit the President, instead of Congress, to incorporate an additional nine million acres of pristine lands, open to mining

42. Besides Stegner, Udall recruited Harold Gilliam, Don Moser, and Henry Romney of *Sports Illustrated* as literary assistants. Schrepfer, "David Brower," OH, 170; Stewart Udall, *The Quiet Crisis* (New York, 1963).

43. *Ibid.*, viii, 173-191; JFK, introduction, xi-xiii. For the reception of the book, see Richard Starnes, "Stewart Udall and the Quiet Crisis," *Field & Stream*, LXVIII (June 1963), 18ff; *American Forests*, LXX (Jan. 1964), 20-21; *New Republic*, CXLIX (Nov. 30, 1963), 19-20; *Saturday Review*, XLVI (Nov. 23, 1963), 39ff.

and oil drilling, into the wilderness system. Indeed, for years Aspinall had bridled over the transfer of authority over public lands from the legislative to the executive branch. To gain Aspinall's cooperation and to move the bill forward, Kennedy agreed to a major review of legislation relating to the disposition of the nation's 770 million acres of public lands.⁴⁴

The proposal to establish a land and water conservation fund also met congressional resistance. Udall's pet project, the conservation fund, sought to raise \$2 billion over the course of twenty-five years to purchase private property for state or national recreational uses. Revenue would be raised by selling surplus nonmilitary public property, taxing motorboat fuel, and assessing admission and user fees at federal recreational areas. Unlike an earlier version, the revised bill called for an annual interest free loan of \$60 million from the third through the eleventh year of the fund's duration. During that time period, sixty percent of the revenue would go as matching grants to states to improve or develop outdoor recreation facilities. The remainder of the money would be available to the federal government to obtain recreation areas with the approval of Congress on a site-by-site basis. After the eleventh year, states would receive fifty percent of the fund, and the national treasury would be apportioned the remainder to repay the interest-free loan. Udall hoped to use the federal share of the fund to establish national parks at Valle Grande (New Mexico), Prairie (Kansas), Ozark Rivers (Missouri), national lakeshores at Indiana Dunes and Sleeping Bear Dunes (Michigan), and national seashores at Oregon Dunes, Fire Island (New York), and Assateague Island (Maryland-Virginia). Members of Congress J. Howard "Ed" Edmondson (D-Ok.) and Charles A. Buckley (D-N.Y.), held up the bill because they strongly opposed user fees.⁴⁵

44. Udall to Clinton Anderson, Dec. 14, 1962, box 98, UP; Udall, Report to the President, Jan. 15, 1963, box 108, UP; Max Edwards, assistant to the Secretary of the Interior, memorandum to Claude Desautels, Feb. 18, March 18, 1963, box 23, Lee White, memorandum for the President, Feb. 26, Claude Desautels, memorandum to Larry O'Brien, May 27, 1963, box 1, O'Brien Papers; Paul Brooks, "Congressman Aspinall vs. the People of the United States," *Harper's* (March 1963), 60-63; Allin, *Politics of Wilderness Preservation*, 127-129; Baker, *Conservation Politics*, 197, 206-208.

45. Udall to Wayne Aspinall, Dec. 14, 1962, box 98, UP; memorandum, "A Report for the President on a Proposal for a Kennedy Administration Land Con-

While Congress deliberated, Kennedy and Udall pushed for public support of their conservation program. In February, the President announced that Secretaries Freeman and Udall had achieved a "milestone in conservation progress" by settling the long-standing rivalry between the Forest Service and National Park Service. Traditionally, the two agencies had squabbled over the jurisdiction and status of pristine lands. In a new spirit of cooperation, however, the Forest Service had agreed to transfer large portions of its holdings to the Park Service for the proposed creation of Oregon Dunes National Seashore and Ozark Rivers National Monument. The two departments would conduct a joint study to determine if lands in the Northern Cascade Mountains of Washington merited national park status. And neither agency "will initiate unilaterally new proposals to change the status of lands under jurisdiction of the other Department."⁴⁶

The administration further demonstrated its concern for environmental issues by announcing plans for another conservation tour in the fall. The President would visit reclamation facilities, recreation sites, and wildlands in the American West.⁴⁷

Actually, the primary purpose of the trip was political. Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin convinced Schlesinger and other members of the White House staff that the subject of conservation would bring political rewards. In 1961 Nelson had taken a conservation trip through Wisconsin and the political results had been "fantastic." He proposed that the President should visit several states and make a series of conservation

ervation Program," May 19, 1961, Draft, "A Proposal for a Conservation Fund," Dec. 5, 1961, undated memorandum, "Estimates of Revenue from Which Allocations Would Be Made to Land Conservation Fund," undated memorandum, "Factors Affecting Strategy on the Secretary's Outdoor Recreation Land Acquisition Program," reel #5, microfilm, Department of Interior Papers, JFKL; *PP* 1963, 163-164; Udall to JFK, Jan. 28, 1963, Ed Edmondson to JFK, Aug. 12, Charles A. Buckley to JFK, Aug. 22, Udall to Lee White with attached draft reply, Aug. 23, 1963, box 8, White Papers.

46. Freeman diary, Dec. 26, 1962; Udall, Report to the President, Jan. 8, 1963, box 108, UP; *PP* 1963, 124-125; Schepfer, "David Brower," OH, 97. To symbolize the new spirit of cooperation between the two departments, Udall in 1962 named Ed Crafts of the Forestry Service to head the newly created Bureau of Outdoor Recreation.

47. White House Press Release, May 14, 1963, box 87, POF; *PP* 1963, 414; *Christian Science Monitor*, Sept. 21, 1963.

speeches. The tour "should be strictly non-partisan (but in effect it would be partisan)" and it would be directed at those millions of independent voters who support candidates who share their sense of concern for conservation.⁴⁸

Udall echoed Nelson's suggestion and recommended that Kennedy visit those western states where Democratic senators would stand for reelection in 1964. He forwarded a copy of *The Quiet Crisis* for background reading and inspiration, but Kennedy apparently only glanced at the table of contents. And during the trip the President's personal reserve and perceived indifference toward nature proved exasperating to the Secretary of the Interior.⁴⁹

The five-day, eleven-state conservation tour took Kennedy to national parks and recreation areas, college campuses, a nuclear facility, a military installation, and several multipurpose dams. On the morning of September 24, the Senate had ratified the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty so the President was in high spirits when he left for Milford, Pennsylvania. There he dedicated the Pinchot Institute for Conservation Studies at the ancestral estate of Gifford Pinchot. Then he traveled to Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, Washington, Oregon, California, and Nevada.⁵⁰

In all, the President delivered fifteen speeches. Crafted weeks in advance by Ted Sorensen and Lee White, the speeches promoted several New Frontier objectives: containing communism, strengthening the military, securing jobs for the unem-

48. Mike Manatos, memorandum for Larry O'Brien, March 11, 1963, box 1, Mike Manatos Papers, JFKL; JFK to Gaylord Nelson, May 16, 1963, folder "N," box 19, POF; Nelson to JFK, May 24, 1963, box 20, Mike Manatos, memorandum for Larry O'Brien, May 29, 1963, box 20, O'Brien Papers; Gaylord Nelson to JFK, Aug. 29, 1963, box 988, White House Central Files, JFKL (hereafter WHCF); Gaylord Nelson, OH, 9-10, JFKL.

49. Udall, memorandum to Kenneth O'Donnell, July 12, 1963, box 103, UP; Udall, memorandum for the President, Sept. 19, 1963, box 80, POF; Udall, "Some Impressions of the President on the Conservation Trip of Sept. 24-29/63 Written, Oct 8/63" (hereafter, Udall, Journal, Conservation Tour, box 112, UP.

50. Udall, *Trip of the President, September 24-28, 1963*, briefing book, box 988, WHCF; PP, 1963, 704-707; Edward P. Cliff, OH, JFKL, 1-5; Bangor (PA) *Daily News*, Sept. 25, 1963; *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Sept. 25, 1963. Udall considered Kennedy's tribute to Pinchot "trite." Udall, Journal, Conservation Tour, box 112, UP; Udall, memorandum, "Some Thoughts on the President's Speeches on His Conservation Trip," undated, *ibid*.

ployed, educating the nation's youth, providing a decent living standard for all citizens, and safeguarding America's resource heritage through the traditional policy of practical use and preservation.⁵¹

Americans, Kennedy said, must protect existing resources, use them wisely, avoid waste, and preserve recreational and wilderness sites. In most of his speeches, Kennedy emphasized resource development over esthetic preservation. Water, especially in the West, should never run to the ocean unused. Arid land should be irrigated and reclaimed. Recreation sites should be developed and used. The President had asked Udall to prepare a statement encouraging Americans to see the United States before traveling abroad. "Maybe it would help," he snapped, "if I could keep my wife at home." (Jackie had recently departed for Greece.) To maintain their quality of life and their position of military and economic leadership, Americans must use science and technology to protect the environment and to develop new energy sources, especially nuclear power plants. Kennedy enjoyed the scenic grandeur of the West, but he was impressed more by the ability of humans "to improve upon nature" by splitting atoms and erecting multipurpose dams such as Grand Coulee in Washington, Flaming Gorge in Utah, and Whiskeytown in California.⁵²

Kennedy's final speech in Las Vegas, Nevada, revised by Udall the day before, carried an ecological message. Future generations required new national parks, lake shorelines, sea-shores, and recreation areas. He called for "a third wave of conservation in the United States following that of Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt." That effort would make "science the servant of conservation" and create "new programs of land stewardship" to protect and preserve the environment.⁵³

Generally, Kennedy's speeches were well-received, especially when he focused on foreign policy. After a polite response to a conservation address at the University of Wyoming, JFK turned mainly to foreign affairs in Great Falls, Montana, and received an

51. David E. Bell, memorandum for the President, Sept. 23, 1963, box 109, POF; Ted Sorensen, memorandum for Mike Feldman, Sept. 19, 1963, box 73, Sorensen Papers.

52. *PP*, 1963, 707-745; Udall, *Journal*, Western Tour, box 112, UP.

53. *PP*, 1963, 746-749.

enthusiastic response. A few people in the crowd shouted "We Want Nixon" and "Nigger President," but the majority were charmed, especially when he pronounced "Montaner" and paid a visit to the parents of Senator Mike Mansfield. Touched by the warm reception, Kennedy told a journalist that he wanted to vacation in Montana in 1964, but he would shun those "cold bastards in Wyoming." When he addressed foreign policy again at the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, he received a rousing response. "Quite frankly," one man wrote later, "I wish you were a Mormon." Kennedy concluded that westerners were not that interested in the subject of conservation.⁵⁴

Kennedy and his supporters considered the conservation trip a major success. Afterwards, in a draft letter to Aspinall, Kennedy described the tour as "one of the most impressive experiences of my life." It had reinforced his decision to "mount a new campaign to protect our natural environment in order that those who come after us will find a green and rich country." Politically, Democrats were encouraged because the crowds were large and enthusiastic. JFK's popularity, they hoped, would result in a significant gain of western states for the President in 1964. The journey, too, was deemed beneficial to senatorial office seekers such as Frank Moss (Ut.), Gale McGee (Wyo.), Henry Jackson (Wa.), and Mike Mansfield (Mt.). The speeches and press attention no doubt raised the level of awareness about environmental issues. Clearly, however, conservation played a secondary role to politics. One newspaper wrote that JFK was "more interested in the conservation of the Democratic party than in the conservation of natural resources." Except for the Wilderness Bill, Kennedy did not push hard for controversial preservation measures

54. PP, 1963, 727-738; Sherri Schott, "My View of President Kennedy," English II Composition attached to Patricia Lee Stevens to Pierre Salinger, Oct. 17, 1963; Norma Beatty to JFK, Sept. 30, 1963, with attached poem, "The President Came to Our Town Yesterday," box 989, WHCF; Bradlee, *Conversations*, 227; Melvin Ogden to JFK, Sept. 26, 1963, box 989, WHCF. Some journalists and historians have claimed that the enthusiastic response to foreign policy prompted Kennedy virtually to ignore conservation for the remainder of the tour. That view is inaccurate. Kennedy never abandoned the theme of conservation. He did not always warm to the subject, but he discussed conservation in every address. Tom Wicker in NYT, Sept. 29, 1963; Jim F. Heath, *Decade of Disillusionment: The Kennedy-Johnson Years* (Bloomington, Ind., 1975), 150-151; Julius Duscha, "JFK Holds to Conservation Vow," *Washington Post*, Sept. 30, 1963.

even when they had received his endorsement. In Utah, for example, he said nothing about the proposed Canyonlands National Park. In the Northwest, he failed to recommend the establishment of the Oregon Dunes National Seashore. Kennedy hesitated to press the case for esthetic values because for most westerners "good conservation" meant the development, not the preservation, of the public domain.⁵⁵

Udall was disappointed by the western tour. The speeches, he wrote privately, were "lousy." Kennedy had overemphasized the utilitarian side of the traditional conservation program. The President, too, seemed to overlook the fact that science and technology had often harmed the environment.⁵⁶

Udall was also disheartened by Kennedy's lack of passion for the land and the outdoors. "I can hardly, with fairness, complain that my man does not have a streak of Thoreau or Robert Frost in his New England makeup, but I long for a flicker of emotion, a response to the out of doors and overwhelming majesty of the land." Udall admitted that it would be "too harsh" to say that JFK was indifferent toward conservation. He had good environmental instincts "whether it be parks or wildlife or pollution—but he doesn't feel the indignation the two truly great conservation presidents felt for the despoilers, and he doesn't respond to the land with their warmth or excited interest."⁵⁷

Privately, Udall cited several examples of Kennedy's "patent unresponsiveness to the pageant of nature." On September 24 the presidential party traveled to northern Wisconsin to visit the Apostle Islands of Lake Superior. Senator Gaylord Nelson had recommended those islands as a national recreation area. As the helicopter passed over the islands, two bald eagles rose from the marshland and glided along side the presidential aircraft. It was

55. JFK to Wayne Aspinall, draft, box 8, Lee White Papers; Senator Frank Moss, interview with author, Aug. 14, 1990; Gale McGee to JFK, Sept. 30, 1963, box 989, WHCF; editorial, *NYT*, Sept. 29, 1963; editorial, *The Oregonian*, Sept. 7, 1963; editorial, *Denver Post*, Sept. 25, 1963; William Stringer in *Christian Science Monitor*, Oct. 2, 1963; "Kennedy Out West," *New Republic*, CXLIX (Sept. 28, 1963), 6; "President Kennedy's Tour," *Living Wilderness*, XXVII (Summer-Fall 1963), 45.

56. Udall, Journal, Conservation Tour, box 112, UP. Later, as a member of President Lyndon Johnson's Cabinet, Udall complained of JFK's lack of a land ethic. See Udall, Cabinet presentation, Oct. 17, 1968, box 17, Cabinet Papers, Lyndon Johnson Library.

57. Udall, Journal, Conservation Tour, 1963, box 112, UP.

a “rare, exciting sight,” but Kennedy seemed disinterested. JFK spent the following evening at the Rockefellers’ Grand Teton Lodge in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Udall wanted the President to awake early the next morning to accompany him on a wildlife and nature walk. When he made the suggestion to White House staff members Pierre Salinger and Ken O’Donnell, however, they just laughed. The closest JFK “came to nature,” wrote one journalist, “was to peer through binoculars at a moose from his lodge window.” Kennedy seemed unmoved by the “glory-colors of the early fall,” and exhibited “no awe at the Teton skyline.” His inquiries about nature were “those one might have expected from a Wall Street investment broker who felt no tug of elemental things.” “There is such a thing,” Udall continued, “as having a poetic feeling about the land. Even a politician can have it (tho most only feign it). The chief lacks it, I’m sorry to say. Imagine a conservation trip where the leader never gets out of his suit or steps off the asphalt. How TR would have hooted at us—he who slept out in the snow with Muir and had the time of his life at 45. Either you love nature or you don’t, I guess it’s that simple.”⁵⁸

The President did step out of character when he visited Lassen Volcanic National Park in northeastern California. He fed a tame deer and spent the evening in a cabin. He remarked that the Park Superintendent had “the best job in the world.” The President’s stay in those modest quarters prompted one journalist to quip that it was still possible in America to be born rich and grow up to live in a cabin.⁵⁹

Throughout the trip Udall also was distressed by press corps rumors concerning Kennedy’s sexual indiscretions. Ben Bradlee of *Newsweek* quipped to Udall: “the girls and mattresses are on the backup plane.” Udall was inclined to discount the “prurient surmises of the press corps,” but Kennedy’s conduct aroused his suspicion. “Why doesn’t he invite me or the senators to come down to his room for a chat or a visit—that would be the normal thing to do.” Was it reserve, Udall wondered, or was “something being concealed?”⁶⁰

58. *Ibid.*; Hubert Humphrey and Gaylord Nelson to JFK, Aug. 12, 1963, box 988, WHCF; *PP*, 1963, 707–714; transcript, ABC radio broadcast, “Edmund P. Morgan and the News,” Sept. 25, 1963, box 112, UP; Vanocur, “Kennedy’s Voyage,” 43; Tom Wicker in *NYT*, Sept. 25, 1963; JFK to Lawrence [*sic*] Rockefeller, Sept. 28, 1963, box 109, POF; Udall, OH, 92.

59. Vanocur, “Kennedy’s Voyage,” 45.

60. Udall, *Journal, Conservation Tour*, box 112, UP.

Udall's grumpy indictment is too severe. He too readily equated personal exposure to natural scenic wonders with a political commitment to preservation. Yet even politicians who developed a bond with nature did not necessarily subordinate other political values for the sake of conservation. Udall often compared Kennedy with Theodore Roosevelt, and JFK always came up short. But Udall drew an idyllic portrait of TR. True, Roosevelt was an outdoorsman who possessed a land ethic, but he did not always support preservation. On the controversial proposal to dam the Hetch Hetchy Valley of Yosemite National Park, he refused to denounce the "temple destroyers." Herbert Hoover, who fished in a suit and tie, professed to be a nature lover, but he had an undistinguished conservation record. Franklin Roosevelt, a champion of conservation, was no outdoorsman. Nor did he gush about western scenery. He was unimpressed with the Grand Canyon because it was not green. When journalist Irving Brant suggested omitting roads from a large section of proposed Olympia National Park, FDR asked: "But how would I get in?" Philanthropist Laurance Rockefeller, historian Bernard De Voto, writer Joseph Krutch, and other prominent conservationists developed a feel for nature without being avid outdoorsmen.⁶¹

Udall's carping comments may have stemmed from his inner conflicts about the conservation movement. He seemed torn between the traditional progressive position which was man-centered and the emerging, postwar perspective which was earth-oriented. The former sought both to balance resource development and preservation. The later downplayed development, especially dam-building, and emphasized wilderness preservation and environmental protection. Udall had difficulty straddling the two positions. Those who favored multipurpose resource use, like Floyd Dominy, head of the Bureau of Reclamation, believed Udall was too close to the "posey sniffers." Preservationists, like David Brower, believed Udall was too cozy with developers. Udall's ambivalence was reflected in the administration's program. At times it seemed receptive to the new ecological approach. But, for the most part, it clung to standard policies.⁶²

61. Fox, *American Conservation Movement*, 121-130, 139-147, 199-200, 218-233, 319-320.

62. Marc Reisner, *Cadillac Desert: The American West and Its Disappearing Water* (New York, 1986), 243. Dominy also complained: "My Secretary's becoming a David Brower type." *Ibid.*, 252; Schrepfer, *Fight to Save the Redwoods*, 139; Schrepfer, "David Brower," OH, 95-96.

Certainly, Udall had little cause to be environmentally self-righteous. Despite his growing interest in environmentalism, he seldom faltered in his support for dam building. He nearly destroyed his credibility with preservationists when he supported the Pacific Southwest Water Plan. That legislation, introduced by his brother, Congressman Morris Udall in 1963, sought to divert water from the humid Northwest to the arid Southwest. It also called for the construction of multipurpose dams in Arizona which would have flooded Grand Canyon National Monument, Marble Canyon, and the lower portion of Grand Canyon National Park. When the Park Service criticized the plan, Udall attempted to muzzle them in the name of departmental unity. He did not give up on the project until 1967 when Congress and the public had turned against it.⁶³

A sense of rejection probably triggered Udall's glum reflections. He was hurt that Kennedy had only skimmed his book. He and other Cabinet members never were able to develop a close relationship with JFK. On the tour, he was with the President at nearly every public appearance, but they shared few private moments together. JFK chose to spend his time alone or with presidential assistants. Too often, Udall felt like a supplicant for Kennedy's favor. Even though Udall's influence over federal conservation was unmatched in the administration, he seemed to want more authority. He sought the same relationship with Kennedy that Pinchot had with Theodore Roosevelt. Pinchot was the President's "conscience on conservation" and "TR had unlimited confidence in Pinchot's judgment and loyalty."⁶⁴

Upon reflection, Udall conceded that he had been too hard on Kennedy. "When you climb a mountain a second time," he noted, "you sometimes see things from a different perspective." Udall had unrealistic expectations about the western tour. The trip had been launched primarily for political gain. Kennedy's

63. Editorials, *National Parks Magazine*, XXXVII (April 1963), 2, (Oct. 1963), 2, 19; editorial, *American Forests*, LXX (April 1964), 3, 48; Richard C. Bradley, "Attack on Grand Canyon," *Living Wilderness*, XXX (Winter 1964-1965), 3-6; Walter Pozen, Assistant Secretary of the Interior, memorandum for Ted Sorensen, enclosing Udall's plan for the development of the Lower Colorado River Basin, Jan. 25, 1963, box 35, Sorensen Papers; Reisner, *Cadillac Desert*, 283-303; Martin, *A Story*, 250-272; Schrepfer, "David Brower," OH, 138-157.

64. Udall, Journal, Conservation Tour, box 112, UP; Udall, handwritten memorandum for Robert Wood, president of M.I.T., undated, unboxed, UP.

reserve made it difficult for him to become passionate about any subject, not just conservation. Unlike his younger brother Robert, JFK never felt comfortable with nature. And the trip was too long to maintain the President's interest.⁶⁵

Udall did not brood for long. After all, for three years Kennedy had supported nearly all of his recommendations. Upon his return to Washington, he and the President pushed hard for the enactment of the Wilderness Bill and the land and water conservation fund measure before the close of the 1963 legislative session in December. After meeting with Aspinall in mid-November, Lee White reported that he had been able to meet the chairman's objections and that those concessions would be agreeable to Senator Anderson and the conservation organizations. He expected the bill to be enacted in the spring of 1964. However, White recommended that Kennedy personally ask Aspinall to call off scheduled western field hearings in order to gain passage of the bill in 1963. A prompt decision, White maintained, would give western members of Congress ample time to explain the measure before the 1964 elections, would prevent conservation groups from raising delay-creating objections, and would enhance the administration's record since the Wilderness Bill was labeled priority legislation.⁶⁶

The administration also pressured Aspinall and other members of Congress on the conservation fund. Although the bill had received a favorable report from the House Interior Committee, Aspinall hesitated to send it to the floor for two main reasons. First, he believed that some federal agencies, such as the Department of the Army and Forest Service, opposed admission fees at federal recreation sites. Until the administration got "its ducks in a row," he warned, the bill would not pass. Second, the measure was opposed by three influential members of Congress—J. Howard Edmondson of the Interior Committee, Charles A. Buckley, chair of the Public Works Committee, and Carl Vinson, chair of the Armed Services Committee. Edmondson objected to en-

65. Udall, interview with author, Aug. 21, 1986; Udall, "Thoughts about the Kennedy Legacy," Nov. 20, 1973, box 208; Udall to George McGovern, March 17, 1971, box 190, UP. For RFK's relationship with nature, see James W. Whittaker, OH, JFKL, 23–24.

66. Lee White, memorandum for the President, Nov. 12, 1963, box 1, White Papers.

trance and user fees at national parks and forests. Buckley and Vinson resisted fees at sites administered by the Army Corps of Engineers and TVA.⁶⁷

Udall, White, and several other administrators prepared a course of action "to get the Fund bill off dead center and give Aspinall assurance of Administration support." In letters to Edmondson and Buckley, White pointed out that fees were neither unreasonable nor unprecedented. Secretary of the Army Cyrus Vance and Orville Freeman informed Aspinall that their departments wholeheartedly supported the bill. Kennedy wrote Aspinall praising the House Interior Committee's report and expressing the hope that that "most significant legislation" would be enacted during the current session. Despite assurances, Aspinall still hesitated to ask for a rule on the bill. With the legislative session coming to a close, only about 300 members remained and he feared that the bill would not gain a majority. An assassin's bullet in Dallas virtually ended the administration's efforts on the Wilderness and Conservation Fund bills.⁶⁸

The year after JFK's death, the 88th Congress, sometimes called the "Conservation Congress," enacted the Wilderness and Conservation Fund bills, created Canyonlands National Park, Fire Island National Seashore, and the Ozark National Scenic Riverways. Before the close of the decade, additional national shoreline and lakefront parks had been established at Assateague Island, Maryland, Pictured Rocks, Michigan, and Indiana Dunes. The Kennedy administration must share credit for those achievements.⁶⁹

67. Robert C. McConnell, confidential memorandum to the Secretary, Oct. 22, 1963, box 107, UP; Claude Desautels, memorandum to Larry O'Brien, Oct. 25, 1963, box 8, White Papers.

68. Lee White, memorandum for Elmer Staats of the Bureau of the Budget, Oct. 16, 1963; Lee White to Ed Edmondson, Oct. 25, 1963; Lee White to Charles Buckley, Oct. 25, 1963; Edward Crafts, memorandum to the record on meeting on the Conservation Fund Bill, Oct. 30, 1963, attached to memorandum to Lee White, Oct. 31, 1963; Lee White to Wayne Aspinall, Oct. 31, 1963; Cyrus Vance to Wayne Aspinall, Oct. 31, 1963; Orville Freeman to Wayne Aspinall, Nov 5, 1963; JFK to Wayne Aspinall, Nov. 4, 1963, all in box 8, White Papers; Robert C. McConnell, confidential memorandum to the Secretary, Nov. 18, 1963, box 107, UP.

69. Udall, Report to the President, Nov. 27, 1963, box 108, UP; Julius Duscha, "JFK Zooms in on Quiet Crisis," unidentified, undated newsclip in box 112, UP; R.G. Lynch, "Tour Places Spotlight on Kennedy's Record," *Milwaukee Journal*, Sept. 22, 1963. For the achievements of the 88th Congress, see editorial, *Memphis Press-*

In three years Kennedy and Udall failed to establish a coherent conservation policy and they were unable to match the record of the two Roosevelts, but their contributions were impressive. By and large, they adhered to a traditional agenda which emphasized resource use, including public recreation, and expansion of the national park system. They created the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, established three national seashores, devised a financial scheme to obtain additional recreation lands, and revitalized a reclamation and recreation program which had been slighted during the Truman and Eisenhower years. They sponsored the first Conservation Conference in fifty years, and Kennedy, like TR and FDR before him, championed conservation with national tours.

But the administration dealt tentatively and ambivalently with the emerging ecological perspective. *The Quiet Crisis* asked Americans to develop a "land ethic for tomorrow" which would not sacrifice the environment or the quality of life in the name of progress. The New Frontier assumed federal responsibility for the control of water pollution and issued a report warning of the dangers of pesticides. It pushed hard for wilderness preservation. And the Departments of Agriculture and Interior launched a joint study to determine what rivers should be left in a free-flowing state. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 eventually emerged from that joint initiative by the executive branch. Yet it was conservationists at the grass-roots level who provided the leadership and major impetus for a new enlightened approach to the environment.

Kennedy and Udall never fully accepted the earth-oriented perspective. They believed that resource development, especially dam-building, was essential to economic growth, national security, and continued political success. David Brower observed that Udall had "to live the political life every day and I think he's been too mindful of that."⁷⁰

Kennedy and Udall were not always sensitive to the new thrusts of environmentalism. And sometimes they advocated policies that clashed with the ecological outlook. Yet they were, with

Scimitar, Aug. 4, 1964, box 165, Aspinall Papers; Baker, *Conservation Politics*, 191-228.

70. Brower quoted in Fox, *John Muir*, 320.

the exception of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, the most conservation-minded administration in the postwar era. They helped bring national attention to environmental issues, reinvigorated a traditional conservation program, and produced a substantial record of accomplishment. Sometimes overlooked, the conservation program must be considered one of the successes of the Kennedy presidency.⁷¹

71. *National Parks Magazine*, XXXVII (July 1963), 16; James K. Carr, OH, JFKL, 13; Carver, OH, 160–163; Edward Cliff, OH, JFKL, 13.