

April 14, 1982

LR 269

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CERLK: Mr. President, right before that if I may, Senator Landis asks unanimous consent to add his name as co-introducer to 269.

SENATOR CLARK: No objection? So ordered.

CLERK: Mr. President, Legislative Resolution 270, on page 1424 of the Journal, it is offered by Senator Newell.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Newell.

SENATOR NEWELL: Mr. President, members of the body, LR 270 is a resolution that was brought to my attention from some friends of mine who was reading the Federal Register and found that a number of forest areas in Nebraska, which there are not very many forest areas, were being opened up by the Secretary of Agriculture for some exploration and mining. Now basically the resolution is self-explanatory, it talks about public land owner...1653 which established the sandhills, the former Secretary of Interior Fred Seaton established that. Basically the McKelvie Forest is part of this overall large package of lands that were being opened up. I singled out the McKelvie Forest because I felt that it was not only a manmade forest but that the fact that the Department of Interior indicated that they did not expect to find any minerals in that area. Now it is a manmade forest as many forests in Nebraska are, or we are the tree planting state, and the fact is that that this is a manmade forest and it is a forest on very fragile soil, sandhills soil, which I'm sure the people are familiar with. Now I think at this point and time since it is the Department's belief that there is not any mineral of any great merit to be found in this area and since there does not seem to be any great interest in opening up this land I think it would be wrong for us to encourage the kind of exploration in the McKelvie National Forest which is right now set aside for grazing and grassland. So I have asked that this Legislature go on record encouraging Secretary Watt to change that policy. We are not asking him to change the policy throughout the many acres that the Department of Interior is proposed to be opened up but in regards to the McKelvie National Forest because of its unique nature, so I would urge this legislature to consider this amendment, that is consider this resolution to adopt it, to urge Secretary Watt and the Department which feels that this land is not likely to be used and not likely to have any great mineral resource to disallow or to disallow any use of this area for that purpose.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Schmit.