

*from the Bureau*

# GREAT PLAINS CONSERVATION PROGRAM

---

---

## HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSERVATION AND CREDIT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FIRST CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

H.R. 561, H.R. 2062, H.R. 3854, and H.R. 10134

---

APRIL 17 AND 18, 1969

---

Serial D

---

Printed for the use of the Committee on Agriculture



U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON : 1969

Mr. POAGE. Now, is there any other Member of Congress who wants to be heard or any Representative who wants to be heard.

If not, I believe we have Mr. Berg with us this morning, representing the Soil Conservation Service. He is accompanied by Mr. Vaught and Mr. Campbell.

We will be delighted to hear from you, Mr. Berg. And you may call on any of your associates as you see fit.

**STATEMENT OF NORMAN A. BERG, ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR,  
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,  
ACCOMPANIED BY WILLIAM VAUGHT AND JOE BRAY**

Mr. BERG. Mr. Chairman, members of the subcommittee, and Members of Congress who have attended the hearing, I have with me this

morning William Vaught, who has worked in the field with the Great Plains conservation program, and is presently a member of our staff in the service office here in Washington; and Mr. Joe Bray, who represents the office of the General Counsel. I have been requested by the Department to read the letter that the chairman just noted.

This is in reply to your request for comments on H.R. 561, 2062, 3854, and 10134. We favor legislation to continue the Great Plains Conservation Program. However, we prefer the provisions of H.R. 10134 because it would:

1. Extend the program from December 31, 1971, to December 31, 1981.

Mr. POAGE. May I interrupt right there. What is the difference between that and the other bills.

Mr. BERG. That is identical, sir.

Mr. POAGE. I know it is. And therefore why do you favor it because of that?

Mr. BERG. This is the primary emphasis of all of these bills. And I think that would be the position of the Department that we do favor the extension of the program for the 10-year period.

Mr. POAGE. But the letter says that you favor it because it extends it. You favor it against the other bills because, and the other bills are identical with it in that respect.

Mr. BERG. Yes, we agree with that.

2. Confirm by legislation the role soil and water conservation districts are playing in helping to implement the program.

3. Provide the Secretary of Agriculture additional latitude to determine adequacy of control of operating units for the contract period. (This would make possible, where conditions warrant, contracts on operating units where customary control is through annual leasing arrangements.)

4. Provide for the Secretary to enter into contracts on land units that are not generally considered farms or ranches where erosion is serious enough to be harmful to the surrounding area.

5. Provide for assistance on agricultural related pollution problems in keeping with overall objectives of the program.

6. Provide for adding measures to enhance fish, wildlife and recreation resources where it will provide opportunity to utilize their resources to improve their economic condition.

7. Provide for modification of contracts to help make the provisions of this program more complementary with other conservation, land use, and commodity programs administered by the Secretary.

It is the policy of this Administration not to commit itself this far in advance, especially for long-range programs. Further, the funding of such a program as this one should be carried out within such budgets and fiscal policies of the President as may be in effect at that time.

The Bureau of the Budget advises that there is no objection to the presentation of this report from the standpoint of the Administration's program.

Sincerely,

J. PHIL CAMPBELL, *Acting Secretary.*

Now, with this letter in the record we are permitted to make this statement to the committee.

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, we are here to present testimony on a number of bills designed to amend Public Law 84 1021. Three of these, H.R. 561, 2062, and 3854 would extend the Great Plains conservation program for another 10 years and increase the authorization by \$100 million. H.R. 10134, in addition to extending the program another 10 years, would increase the authorization by \$150 million and would add certain other features, namely, confirming by legislation the role being played by soil and water conservation districts in helping to implement the program; providing the Secretary additional latitude to determine adequacy of control

of an operating unit for contract purposes; providing for entering into contracts on land units that are not considered farms or ranches but where serious erosion is occurring; providing for adding practices and measures that enhance fish, wildlife and recreation resources for promoting economic uses of land, and for reducing and controlling agricultural related pollutants harmful to soil and water resources; and providing for modification of contracts to assure equitable treatment with respect to other similar conservation, land use or other commodity programs administered by the Secretary of Agriculture.

While we consider all of these bills to be desirable, we favor H.R. 10134 because of the added features which we believe would improve the Great Plains conservation program.

The Great Plains conservation program provides technical and financial assistance through long-term contractual arrangements to help farmers and ranchers install complete conservation programs on their entire operating units. They in turn agree to share the cost and assume the responsibility of installing and maintaining the needed soil and water conservation measures over the period they consider necessary to do the job.

#### HISTORY

Dependable agriculture in the Great Plains States is vital to all America. These 10 States spanning our Nation from North to South contain over a third of our Nation's land area and two-fifths of our cropland. It is an area which experiences sustained periods of extremely dry weather. High winds occasionally sweep the Plains causing serious wind erosion where surface of the soil is not protected. The severe land damage from wind erosion in the 1930's led to the origin of the term "Dust Bowl" for a large area of the Plains.

During the mid-1950's, the Great Plains suffered from another extended drought which caused severe wind erosion, loss of crops, untimely sales of livestock, and in some cases loss of farms and ranches due to economic stress. Violent duststorms caused by high winds again drew national attention. Dust was carried aloft for hundreds of miles. State and county highway maintenance costs rose because of soil drifting across roads. Driving at times became hazardous, and dust in the air caused human suffering again.

In 1955, governing bodies of soil and water conservation districts and other organizations, groups, and agencies began seriously to study the erosion and other problems of the Plains for the purpose of recommending programs that would help stabilize the resources and the economy of the area. In early 1956 the Great Plains Agricultural Council with assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture recommended a program for the Great Plains which was transmitted to the Congress by President Eisenhower. Public Law 1901 establishing the Great Plains conservation program was enacted in August of that year.

And I may say because of the interest of this particular committee. U.S. Department of Agriculture agency representatives at State levels, along with directors of extension and experiment stations, State agricultural agencies, governing bodies of soil and water conservation districts, and other agricultural leaders jointly reviewed the hazardous wind erosion areas in each of the 10 States. They made recommenda-

tions to the Secretary of Agriculture as to the boundaries that should be established for program participation and recommended the initial counties in each State to be eligible to participate. After the initial designation, other counties within the area were required to request designation by the Secretary, based on criteria established for program participation. The area embraces 427 counties in parts of 10 States as shown by the map and list of designated counties. (Attachment No. 1.) Four hundred and twenty of these counties were designated through June 30, 1968. Since then, three other counties have been designated.

The recommendations for action, along with testimony during the hearings, made clear that a strong effort must be made to stabilize the resources of the Plains. In addition to the critical need to establish protective cover on large acreages of unstable land, the program was designed to achieve a more stable agriculture, more dependable source of income, and a more satisfactory livelihood for the people of the region.

It was recognized that emergency treatment measures would not bring about this stability. A program to obtain complete conservation treatment on entire operating units as rapidly as possible was needed. The program, as developed under Public Law 1021, provides for technical as well as long-term cost-sharing assistance to help farmers and ranchers who are willing to install and maintain complete conservation on their units. Cost-share contracts range from not less than 3 years to not more than 10.

In establishing the operating policies of the program, it was determined that priority should be given to those farmers and ranchers needing to make changes in the use of their land to mitigate the hazards of wind and water erosion. A plan of operations, including a time schedule of treatment installation, is a prerequisite for program participation. Conservation plans, developed in cooperation with soil and water conservation districts, serve adequately as a basis for contracts. The program is designed to be in addition to other Department programs in the area, and provision is made for farmers and ranchers to use other programs in carrying out their soil and water conservation plans.

Representatives of agencies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, along with assistance from soil and water conservation districts, extension service, farm organizations, and others, serve as a program development group at both State and county levels. Needed adjustments in the program are made each year to keep pace with the costs, new technology, and fluctuating weather. This assures that program adjustments are made when needed and it helps to bring about desirable coordination of all programs designed to assist in stabilizing agriculture in the plains.

The Great Plains conservation program requires the application of certain management-type practices where needed even though cost-sharing under this program is not available. While the entire operating unit must be planned for all needed conservation treatment over a 3- to 10-year period, participants may proceed as rapidly as their own financial resources permit. In order to allow as many farmers and ranchers as possible to get started on complete conservation plans, a limit of \$25,000 for any one unit was established. Experience has shown that contracts average about \$3,500 in Federal cost-sharing

spread over about 5½ years. This means about \$630 a year in Federal cost-sharing is used by individuals on the average in carrying his conservation plan through to completion.

The Great Plains conservation program is not a land retirement program. No rental payments are included. It is aimed at obtaining shifts and improvement in land uses based on the varying capability of land, rather than crop reduction. This permits the units under contract to continue operation as viable farms and ranches contributing to the economic stability of rural communities. The program provides opportunities for participants to stabilize their operations by insuring carryover feed for livestock to avoid untimely sales during drought or other emergencies. Through application of needed conservation treatment, more dependable production and more stable income is assured.

On June 30, 1968, a total of 31,122 contracts covering 56,601,700 acres had been executed. The effect of the program in bringing about needed land-use adjustment is evidenced by the fact that producers have contracted to convert about 21 percent of their cropland to permanent cover. Nearly 15 percent of the cumulative cost-share payments paid to producers through June 30, 1968, was for the establishment of permanent grass on land previously used for cropland, and about 22 percent was for practices connected with the reestablishment of vegetative cover on range and pasturelands.

The average contract executed in fiscal year 1968 covered 1,604 acres with an average Federal cost-share obligation of \$3,471. Progress of the program by States, showing cost shares paid by practices, status of applications and contracts—including a graphic description—is contained in more detail in attachments No. 2 and No. 3.

The Department of Agriculture, under the chairmanship of the Soil Conservation Service and with assistance from representatives of State and local agencies, has been updating the National Conservation Needs Inventory. We had completed this inventory 10 years ago, and we felt the need to update it. And that process is nearly completed.

The inventory when completed, will represent the composite judgment of more than 30,000 people at county, State, and National levels on the soil and water conservation treatment needs of the Nation's non-Federal rural lands.

Preliminary inventory data for the Great Plains conservation program area show an estimated 110,500,000 acres of cropland and 215 million acres of range and pasturelands. About 43 million acres of cropland and 91 million acres of range and pastureland now have treatment adequate to meet the conservation needs of the land. Thus, more than half the cropland and range and pastureland still need conservation treatment. These acreages include about 5,500,000 acres of cropland that are not suited for sustained cropland production and should be converted to permanent vegetation, and about 12,500,000 acres of range and pasturelands that need reestablishment of vegetation cover.

Conservation treatment of cropland, rangeland, and pastures produces substantial community and national benefits. Proper land use and treatment materially reduce the sediment polluting our Nation's streams and reduces soil dust in the air. Dust contamination of the air, causes among other things, serious respiratory ailments.

Investigations show that all soil blowing does not start on cropland that is not suitable for cultivation. Sometimes it starts on good cropland that has been improperly farmed, or it may start on rangeland that has been severely overused, especially where sandy soils prevail.

The sudden, intense rainstorms that visit the plains area from time to time are further reason for guarding against land damage from this source through conservation measures. Plains farmers and ranchers have learned how to turn these high intensity storms to their benefit by conserving runoff that otherwise would result in water erosion and soil loss.

Experience has shown that certain additions to the present programs as proposed by H.R. 10134 would be desirable. This bill would confirm by legislation the important role that soil and water conservation districts are playing in helping to implement the program. Provisions would be made to give the Secretary additional latitude to determine adequacy of control of operating units for the contract period. This would make possible, where conditions warrant, contracts on land units where customary control is through annual leasing arrangements. This bill would also provide for the Secretary to enter into contracts on land units that are not generally considered farms or ranches where erosion is serious enough to be a menace to the area. It would provide for assistance on certain agricultural related pollution problems in keeping with the overall objectives of the program, and would include measures to enhance the fish, wildlife, and recreation resources of the Great Plains. We believe, the inclusion of these added provisions would contribute to a more adequate consideration and development of the multiple-use potentials of the area. These provisions would not change the basic nature of the program which deals primarily with the climatic hazards of the area. Lastly, this bill would provide for the modification of existing contracts to help make the provisions of this program complementary with other conservation, land use, and commodity programs administered by the Secretary.

I might insert at this point, Mr. Chairman, that these recommendations that have been considered in the bill H.R. 10134 came primarily from a field committee chaired by the late state conservationist H. N. "Red" Smith of Texas. Our previous Administrator, Don Williams, asked men who had worked on this program for a period of time and had this experience in the field, to look at what they thought would be desirable in the future. These ideas came from field experience.

It is important to point out that all of the proposed legislation makes no changes in the existing boundaries of program eligibility. The Great Plains conservation program provides assistance to help alleviate difficult conservation problems in a particular wind erosion area of the country. This program, along with others, such as the agricultural conservation program, Farmers Home Administration, cropland adjustment program, research and other programs of the Soil Conservation Service, are all teaming up to help bring about significant progress in stabilizing the plains area.

The success of this unique program is dependent upon two important factors: (1) The willingness of farmers and ranchers to agree to place their entire operating units under contract to install complete

conservation treatment; and (2) the availability of timely technical and financial assistance. Well over 31,000 individuals have entered into contracts to date and there are more applicants waiting each year than can be serviced. At a time when many farmers and ranchers are still willing to enter into contracts to complete the needed conservation treatment on their entire units, it is important to continue the USDA-farmer-rancher cooperative efforts another 10 years. This is particularly true when one recalls the insidious cycles of drought that are sure to reoccur in the plains area. Our Nation cannot afford to leave the area unprotected again.

While all of these bills are desirable, we would recommend enactment of H.R. 10134 since it would couple extension of the program with additions which this Department believes would be highly beneficial.

My colleagues and I would be happy to try to answer any questions of the subcommittee, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. POAGE. Thank you very much, Mr. Berg.

Of course, you have dwelt on one of the factors which has occurred to me that causes some little trouble, and as I said in the beginning, that is, the limitations of the area in which it is applicable. I just can't conceive of your drawing lines anywhere that people wouldn't want to extend somewhere on beyond. Possibly we have made a mistake as getting off the plains as such. We have gotten this off of the actual plains long ago. We do have it confined to the area of severer climate, wind erosion, and those sorts of things are factors in every one of the counties I think that is now included, and they are factors in a good many other counties that are not included. So I come back to the question of whether it is or is not practical to simply suggest that you provide in the legislation that this should be available to all landowners that want it in these 10 States. The present law reads and the bill H.R. 1024 reads that during this period such contracts may be entered into on farms, ranches and other lands in counties in the Great Plains area of the States of Colorado, Kansas, and so on.

It then says:

In counties in the Great Plains area of the States of Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas and Wyoming designated by the Secretary as susceptible to serious wind erosion by reason of their soil types, terrain and climatic and other factors.

I wonder if it might not simply read that the contracts could be entered into on farms and ranches and other lands in the States of—naming the 10 States—where the landowner and operator shall furnish the Secretary with the plan of the farming operations on the land, and so on. I don't think that that could mean at all that you would have a sign-up of all the land in the other parts of these States, or anything like the larger percentage of the land as you have in the Great Plains area itself.

But you would then leave to the individual the decision of whether he considered that it was worth his while to spend his money—because he has to put something into this—you would leave it up to the individual to make that decision rather than having that decision made simply on an arbitrary basis.

I know it would cost somewhat more, because there would be those who would take advantage of it, particularly east of the present line, and I am sure in some instances to the west of the present line. But I



can't believe that there would be many people up there in that western area of Montana, which is the mountainous area, the mining area, would go into this program. Neither can I believe that many of these people in the Piney Woods of Texas would go into it, because it is not something that would serve them very well. But there are a lot of farmers in this twilight area who would like to be in it. And they feel—and I know how they feel, because I represent a district that joins this area—they feel that they should have the same opportunity as their neighbor just across the county line now has, to make the decision as to whether they wanted to go into the program or not.

You don't sign everybody up that is in this red area; not by any manner or means. But you give those people an opportunity to go in. And these people in the white areas feel that they would like to have that same opportunity. What is your feeling on that?

Mr. BERG. Mr. Poage, I know of your long and helpful interest in this matter. We have felt, as you have expressed here, the need to reexplore the definition of where this program should apply. The committee that I mentioned did consider this matter. They made a recommendation that the legislative history, of course, that produced the law would have to reflect an attitude such as you are expressing to allow the Department to do somewhat different than what we have been doing, which is primarily holding to the line as designated in 1956.

I agree that the western boundary, especially in the Northern States, is probably about where it should be, because there we are up against the Rocky Mountains, except in Texas. The eastern portions of those States have requested periodically some adjustment. And as you point out, not all of the people participate in this program. The history to date is that in the Great Plains designated area, 11 percent of the farms and ranches are taking part in the program. They represent about 17 percent of the land. With the extension we are talking about here, this may perhaps double that number in the next 10 years.

Mr. POAGE. How could it double it? In this white area here you don't have more than about half the land that you have in the counties that are now eligible, and certainly your percentage of participation will be much smaller.

Mr. BERG. Mr. Chairman, if the program were extended for 10 years we would expect the number of participants to about double from the standpoint of what we have now in the 15-year history of the act.

Mr. POAGE. I think that is reasonable. Excuse me, I thought you meant that if you included this white area that it would double the number of persons.

Mr. BERG. Now, this group of field people felt that perhaps an adjustment of up to about 50 more counties in the area that they feel from personal experience and talking to the local farmers and ranchers and conservation district supervisors is about the extent of what would be a legitimate expansion over another decade. Now, again coming back to this point, under our previous legislative history that developed the act we now operate under, we have felt compelled to pretty much stay within the boundary that we had talked about in 1956. However, we need to recognize that in this eastern part of the area there are counties without question that do have application to this program.

I was in South Dakota during the time that the line was drawn, and there could have easily been another tier of counties to the east, because of the marginal type of operation in those particular counties. There are programs that do operate successfully in this area. The small-watershed program applies more in this area than it does in the high plains country. And there are possibilities of other programs that perhaps can answer some of the needs of that area. But there are counties to the east of this boundary that should be considered in the future, especially when we are talking about a program that would extend through the 1970's.

Mr. POAGE. You are familiar somewhat, I am sure, with the situation in north central Texas?

Mr. BERG. Right.

Mr. POAGE. You know what we call the cross timbers, the east and west cross timbers. They are sandy areas. And where they were put in cultivation, unfortunately a considerable part was put in cultivation a number of years ago, and they should not have been. But where they have been put in cultivation they blow just about as badly as that country up in the panhandle. In fact, I have seen probably greater sand dunes or sand over the fences in some of that cross timber country than I ever saw up on the true plains. Now, we look upon the plains as the area above the cap rock, the high plains. I know that we speak of the red lands as the rolling plains. They are not plains in the sense that they are entirely level, because they are probably just as rolling as some of this Maryland country is. And the same thing is true on into Oklahoma, of course. But a whole lot of this country is not the perfectly flat land that we think of up on the high plains. But it blows just the same. It has many of the same characteristics. And it seems to me that it would be desirable to let those individuals make the decision if they want to come in.

And you get an average of 11 percent in this area—I would think you would get an average of 5 or 6 percent in this area, possibly. You wouldn't get as large a percentage of the land, obviously, because there wouldn't be as many who would need it. But for many individual farms it is just as important as it is in the areas just west of there.

I expect that 50 counties might very well take care of the need. And I wonder if we might more or less understand that if we passed this bill without changing that feature of it that the Department would expect to add something on the order of 50 counties: possibly more.

Mr. BERG. Mr. Chairman, we would certainly be able to give more thought to this matter than we have had in the past, because of the previous legislative intent of the 1956 act.

Mr. POAGE. You have actually added something in the last few years?

Mr. BERG. Yes; we have added five in this 15-year period beyond that designated line that was drawn in 1956. These have been carefully considered one by one. We certainly would not want to dilute the present intent of this program. And that point, I think, is very well understood. It would be a matter of the budget available and the amount of funding that could be applied in these areas.

I might point out that within the plains country itself, as designated on this map, there are counties that, even though they have been designated, have found that their particular local area really didn't need this program, and therefore they have not asked for help. It is an entirely voluntary participating effort.

But with new legislative history the Department would have some guidelines as to how to consider the applicability of these areas, and what criteria to draw. We would certainly hope that we could hold to the intent that it would be based on local needs expressed with a willingness to do something about the problems, and that we would be able to have agreement by the county and State program development groups that these counties would have problems that are similar to the intent of this program.

Mr. POAGE. I just wanted to have an answer that if we passed this amendment that the Department would recognize that it was entirely proper, to say the least, to add a group of counties particularly to the east—and I don't claim to speak for those far north, but from what little I know of them, Mr. Andrews' district is promised several counties there. It seems to me that there should be some counties added in central Oklahoma.

And I am quite sure that there should be 20 or 25 or maybe 35 counties added in Texas, to give us the opportunities that the farmers would take advantage of. Is that along the line of your thinking?

Mr. BERG. Yes. I think from our experience that when we operate this program on an extended basis on through 1970 the expression of your concern about these counties and the problems that are very similar to what we have been dealing with right along the boundary line need to be considered. We need to have the flexibility in the administration of the program to take care of those sorts of areas.

Mr. POAGE. Then there are those counties, which frankly I overlooked, that Mr. White's statement mentioned—Presidio, Brewster, and I guess Culbertson, I forget the counties he named, they are on the south—they run between your program and the Rio Grande River. Of course, they are pure desert counties actually. They are part of the Plains counties, we call them the trans-Pecos country. They are not very mountainous; most of them are great desert areas that the wind certainly does blow on. And they certainly should be added.

Mr. BERG. I think we should use judgment on this certainly, with the legislative history that we are developing now.

Mr. POAGE. Thank you. That is what I wanted to be sure of.

Let me ask you about one other phase. This proposed legislation would extend this program for 10 years. Many of the contracts are 10-year contracts. Those entered into toward the end of the extension period would actually, in effect, double the period of time in which there was an obligation to the United States.

In other words, it is possible under the terms of this to have contracts entered into which would not be performed until 20 years from now instead of 10. So that it does project the program further into the future. Why do we put a cutoff date on the program at all? We don't do it on our small watershed program, as an illustration, and we don't do it on a great many others. Why do we put any cutoff date on this?

Mr. BERG. I think this is a good question that applies both to the legislation itself and to the authorization level, because all of our other items that we administer do not have either. The funding comes primarily—well, it comes through the process that you all know so well, the Department makes its presentations, the Bureau of the Budget makes its allowances, and the Congress appropriates the money annually.

The way we operate this program, when a contract is signed we set aside all of the cost-share funds that would be needed for the length of the contract, so that there is no need to live beyond our means, so to speak. In other words, we do assure and set aside the needed funds to carry out the program as far as the cost-share obligations are concerned.

So it is a good question from the standpoint of whether there is a time limit needed or authorization level needed. Because the way we operate the other programs in the Soil Conservation Service we do not have either of these limitations.

Mr. POAGE. Do you see any reason why we should put this time limitation on any new bill?

Mr. BERG. Well, we would be able to live with it, because I think the opportunity to come back before the Congress and report on progress and reexamine the intent of the program and the way it has been operated is a valuable assist to the Department. Therefore, we have not objected to the idea of extending it for another decade. I do think we need to have an indication that it is the concern of this Nation through the Congress that this area be treated in accordance with the resource and conservation needs that these people feel. That sort of assurance is desirable.

Mr. POAGE. I still don't see that you are going to get any real advantage of the time limit, because obviously any time Congress wants to change a program, anybody can introduce legislation at any time to do it. And we do do that with a great many programs. I am just wondering why the 10-year limitation. It doesn't seem to me that you have shown any great need for the 10-year limitation.

Mr. BERG. No; I have pointed out that our other programs do not have the limitations.

Mr. POAGE. Are there any other questions?

Mr. MAYNE. Mr. Berg, you have placed great emphasis on the previous legislative history which pretty well controlled the areas that the Department has felt free to administer in this program in the past. And I believe you have indicated that you think that this extension should also be handled by legislative history rather than by specific amendment. Is that correct?

Mr. BERG. Yes; Mr. Mayne. The present act does provide that the program could operate in the 10 named States. It has been an administrative decision that has drawn the line that we see on the map.

Mr. MAYNE. I would just like to be clear in my own mind as to what kind of legislative history you think will be needed to give you freedom to extend the areas in the future. Is what has already taken place in this record today considered by you to be adequate, or do you want further legislative history before you feel free to go ahead and extend these limits?

Mr. BERG. I think it would be adequate, Mr. Congressman, because we do have a long history of what it is that we are actually facing here in terms of some boundary shifts. This has been developed, and there has been quite a record made in terms of the local need, that the people felt that they should have a right to participate in this program.

It would be a matter of judgment, and I think without question a matter of funding, because the people within the primary area here would still be concerned that the original intent of the act not be lost.

Mr. MAYNE. Is the fact that this record has been made here in the subcommittee going to be sufficient for your purpose, or will the Department feel that it must also be made on the floor at the time of the debate?

Mr. BERG. I would think that the Department could be responsive to the discussion that has taken place here in the subcommittee. The reason I say that is that within the Soil Conservation Service we would certainly be fully cognizant of what has been talked about here. We are charged with the administration of the program. Now, if the Department as a whole has other views on this, they would have the opportunity to express them. But with our leadership responsibilities and with the history of working this program since 1956, we feel that the judgment that would be needed here could be exercised.

Mr. MAYNE. Mr. Chairman, I don't seem to have a copy of Price's testimony. Did he submit a written statement?

Mr. POAGE. Yes.

Mr. MAYNE. I know that Mr. Price was here for some time. But he was not able to stay.

Mr. POAGE. We have already turned his copy over to the reporter.

Mr. MAYNE. I wonder if his testimony points out additional areas to which an extension should apply that ought to be a part of this legislative history.

Mr. POAGE. I wouldn't imagine it would, because every county in Mr. Price's district is in the area now.

Mr. MAYNE. That is something that I was not aware of.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is all the questions I have.

And thank you, Mr. Berg.

Mr. POAGE. Are there any other questions?

If not, we are very much obliged, Mr. Berg.

Mr. BERG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.