

NATIONAL RESOURCES
PLANNING FACTS

FOR:

PEOPLE

USE

LAND

CONSERVATION

WATER

ORGANIZATION

MINERAL

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WHAT WE HAVE

POPULATION

1930 census.....	122,775,046
1940 estimate	132,000,000
1980 estimate	153,000,000

LAND

Total area.....	2 billion acres
Farm.....	over 1 billion acres or approx. 55% of total
Urban.....	12 million acres or less than 1% of total
Forest.....	615 million acres or approx. 34% of total
Other lands.....	approx. 10% of total

WATER

Precipitation, average yearly.....	29½ inches
Runoff	10 to 50%
Evaporation	10 to 30%
Into the ground	40 to 60%
Area of surface water	53,000 square miles
Inland waterways (navigable)	27,400 miles

Water Power:

1937 production.....	43 billion KWH
1937 installed capacity.....	10½ million KW
Estimated average yearly output not yet developed.....	275 billion KWH

MINERALS

Metals:

Iron ore (reserve)	4½ billion tons
Copper (reserve).....	35 million tons
Lead (reserve)	10 million tons
Zinc (reserve).....	12 million tons
Gold (estimated production to 1950).	60 million ounces
Silver (reserve depends on copper, lead, and zinc ores. See above.)	

Non-metals:

Bituminous coal (reserve)	1,407 billion tons
Anthracite coal (reserve).....	15½ billion tons
Other coals (reserve).....	1,757 billion tons
Petroleum (reserve).....	15½ billion barrels
Natural gas (reserve)	66 trillion cubic feet
Phosphate rock (reserve).....	7 billion tons
A potash reserve of 27 million tons has been determined for New Mexico deposits only.	

(All figures on this page are approximate, but present a general picture of our resources.)

RESOURCES ARE WASTED

The 2 billion acres of land within the United States, the rain and snow that falls on this land, the rivers, waterfalls, and lakes, the coal, oil, gold and silver, and other mineral deposits that lie on and beneath the land, the people that live here and their multitude of talents, skills, and activities form our national resources. The wealth of the nation is measured in the way we conserve, use and develop these resources.

THE ERA OF WASTE

The resources of this country were tremendous. They made the United States the "promised land" for all the rest of the world. The eager rush in the nineteenth century to reap the rewards of a nation so richly endowed left a tragedy of waste and depletion in its wake. Even today the wasteful, planless use of our still great resources continues virtually unchecked in many fields.

Soil erosion has taken a heavy toll, injuring 775 million acres of land, while 282 million acres have been ruined or severely damaged. The productive value of 75 percent of our tilled land has been reduced. It is estimated that soil erosion in the last fifty years has cost about 20 billion dollars. A more startling statement is that 50 million acres of formerly good farm land has been destroyed by soil erosion, or an area equal to that of Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Connecticut combined. Our forest area has been reduced one-half from the 850 million acres we had 300 years ago. The waste of our mineral resources has been tremendous, particularly in the field of gas and oil. In one natural gas field in the United States during 1934, a billion cubic feet a day was blown into the air, enough to supply

every householder in the United States. In the field of metal-mining, the rapid exhaustion of ores easily extracted has made mining today a costlier operation. We have long trusted to new discoveries of deposits to make good our careless use, but these new discoveries are becoming fewer. Mining authorities point out that of the 33 metal-mining districts yielding our greatest wealth to date, no new areas have been discovered since 1907. In the petroleum field we must be cautious in prediction, for this is a newer activity and possibilities of new discoveries do exist, but authorities have reported that, taking into account all the reserves we know about, there is an estimated supply of petroleum that will, at our present rate of use, dwindle to nothing in 15 years.

THE MOVE TO CONSERVE

All this is not a new story. A quarter of a century ago, conservationists followed Theodore Roosevelt into the battle to protect our forests, water resources, and our wildlife. As the realization of our wasteful practices became more widely known, efforts to protect the resources of the Nation became more successful. With the development of forest preserves, national forests, and wildlife refuges, the recognition of the need for a sensibly planned program for protecting ALL our resources became more apparent.

TO CONSERVE IS TO PLAN

With each new endeavor to protect some one resource against waste and destruction, it has become more evident that a program for *all* resources is needed, a program looking to the future in order to plan the development of our resources in a way that will insure wise use consistent with their conservation. Planning the con-

ervation and development of resources for our population now and in the future has become a vital need.

WE ALL PLAN

We all plan in our daily lives—the housewife plans her meals and the arrangement of her table, the husband plans his work, and together husband and wife plan insurance to protect their old age; they plan savings to educate their children. Just as a family plans, so must a community plan if it is to be able to live and develop without waste in efficiency and with comfort and beauty. Without planning there is no security, no stability, no assurance of orderly community growth; there is no assurance that the inhabitants of a town, city, or state will enjoy the good things of life in the future.

LOCAL PLANNING

Over 1,000 towns and cities, and more than 500 of the 3,000 counties in the United States are doing planning work today. They plan ahead in order that their budgets may provide for playgrounds and parks this year and streets and highways in the years to come. They zone residential districts to protect home values and provide for the expansion of business and industry. They study their population growth and the needs of their citizens. In the light of their financial positions, they arrange programs and plans for the future.

STATE PLANNING

The state and national governments, to some extent, do likewise. It is only recently, however, that planning, based on comprehensive surveys of all resources has been practiced at these higher levels of government. It is not, however, as a result from some sudden impulse that our American states have begun system-

atically to organize agencies and set up programs to bring about the highest and best use of our vast state and national domain. This move is the outgrowth of a long series of experiments of the trial and error type through which the American states came to realize the importance of orderly development of the fullest possibilities of their assets. A realization of the significance of an orderly treatment of resources has grown with the development of the conservation and city planning movements.

The value to the Nation of the whole state conservation and planning trend is stressed in a recent review of the work of state planning boards:

If planning can bring about a more economical utilization and conservation of our resources, it will contribute much toward maintaining, the foundations of representative government. . . . Representative government rests upon a faith in gradualism, a general acceptance of the proposition that through governmental action a slow but certain adjustment of injustices will occur.

There are today 45 State Planning Boards operating either by State laws or through governors' appointments. These boards have taken an inventory of state resources. Their studies have revealed which resources are plentiful and which are lacking. They have shown, for example, whether or not the states have sufficient educational facilities, highways, charitable institutions, parks, and other recreational facilities, all with relation to the people who live in their states now and, as well, to the increased or decreased population that may live in those states in the future.

REGIONAL PLANNING

There are many problems that do not stop at state lines. Rivers, for example, carry pollution over state boundaries and the states affected have to solve problems of this kind by group agreement and action. Planning for the settlement of such difficulties is done by two or more states acting as a region. An example of this is seen in New England and the Pacific Northwest where the state planning boards cooperate as regional planning commissions to meet a variety of interstate problems.

There are many different types of regions. Where there is a community of interest overlapping state lines, like that between St. Louis in Missouri and East St. Louis in Illinois, or between New York City and the cities that lie across the Hudson river on the New Jersey shore, a metropolitan region has been developed for planning the solution of urban problems. In another kind of region the TVA is working to bring about a higher standard of living for the inhabitants of an area rich in water resources for navigation, power and flood-control but without facilities for developing them.

FOR THE NATION

For the Federal government, the National Resources Committee makes studies of the Nation's resources, and of social, industrial and economic trends, and, from these studies in an advisory capacity recommends programs and policies for conservation and development of land, water, mineral, population, scientific and technological, or other national resources.

"FROM THE BOTTOM UP"

The planning done by the Committee for better conservation and use of national resources in collaboration with other Federal agencies has the benefit of knowledge

and needs developed at other levels of government. The Committee has said repeatedly that "planning must come from the bottom up." The democratic procedure is for villages and cities to study and plan for local programs, and for these programs to be fitted with those of county, state, and regional planning organizations. In this way no arbitrary programs are imposed by the higher levels of government on the lower.

NATIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The National Resources Committee, formerly the National Planning Board and the National Resources Board, was established by President Roosevelt, June 30, 1934, and operates under instructions:

"(a) To collect, prepare and make available to the President, with recommendations, such plans, data and information as may be helpful to a planned development and use of land, water, and other national resources, and such related subjects as may be referred to it by the President.

"(b) To consult and cooperate with agencies of the Federal government, with the states and municipalities or agencies thereof, and with any public or private planning or research agencies or institutions, in carrying out any of its duties and functions."

HOW IT WORKS—AS A CLEARING HOUSE

To carry out these instructions the Committee operates in several ways. It acts through technical committees and its staff, as a clearing house in the Federal government for the forty-five state planning boards and the several regional planning commissions, and also as a coordinator of programs for other Federal agencies concerned with various resources.

HOW IT WORKS—AS A RESEARCH AND ADVISORY BODY

Perhaps the Committee's greatest service to planning for the protection and development of resources is in the field of research. Its studies of land, water, and mineral resources; of science, population, and technological trends; and of consumption and production factors have brought together for the first time basic facts about these resources as a foundation for advisory recommendations to the President and Congress. For these studies the Committee has set up technical subcommittees, which make reports and develop the bases of recommendations.

HOW IT WORKS—AS A CORRELATOR

Other Federal departments concerned with resources plan programs of work in their own particular fields. In some respects these fields overlap. For example, there are 23 Federal agencies in some way concerned with the Nation's water problems. The Resources Committee acts as a correlator, in such instances, of plans and programs only, not of the work itself. This correlation is effected through representation of the different Federal agencies on technical subcommittees of the NRC. For example, the Army Engineers, the Public Health Service, the Geological Survey, the Reclamation Service and the Biological Survey are all represented on the Water Committee. A study of energy resources of the country included representation from agencies like the Bureau of Mines, the Federal Power Commission, the Interstate Commerce Commission and others that have something to do with those resources used in the production of power. The Land Committee has a membership that represents the Department of Interior and the

Department of Agriculture, as well as specialists from outside the Government. Meeting around the conference table, these representatives are able to bring to problems the technical resources of their various organizations as well as the different points of view developed by carrying out their different functions. Thus the information and experience of the Federal government is brought together for purposes of planning.

PLANNING FOR USE

Conservation of resources is not practiced for the sake of conservation alone. The protection and development of resources is planned for a definite purpose, namely, for the use of the American people. A part of the problem, therefore, becomes the necessity of knowing the needs of our citizens. How large a population must be served by the country's resources and the nature of that population not only today, but 10, 20, 50 years from now, assuming that ratios of birth and immigration continue as they are, is something the Committee tried to determine in its study "Problems of a Changing Population." What amount of the products of our resources is required to clothe, house, feed our consuming population, and what amount and kind of industrial resources are necessary to convert our physical resources into products the American population wishes to consume are fields of investigation entered into by the Committee in making its studies of consumption and production.

DEMOCRATIC PLANNING

Studies have been made in these fields and are continuing. Reports have been completed which contain the facts and recommendations for programs and policies. These reports have been turned over to the President and the Congress for consideration and such action as they may see fit in keeping with democratic practices.

NRC IS ADVISORY ONLY

The National Resources Committee is an advisory agency only. It has no administrative power and has stated that it should have none. Its function is to act as a special advisory agency to the President and the Congress. The President and the Congress may accept, modify, or reject these recommendations. The appropriate government departments, as usual, will administer the recommended programs put into action by the Executive or the Congress.

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