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Granting concessions and leasing lands in connection with reservoir sites and Indian irrigation projects. Volume 9879, Report no. 615 1935

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GRANTING CONCESSIONS AND LEASING LANDS IN CONNECTION WITH RESERVOIR SITES AND INDIAN IRRIGATION PROJECTS

MAY 13, 1935.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. THOMAS of Oklahoma, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 2656]

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 2656) authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to grant concessions on reservoir sites and other lands in connection with Indian irrigation projects and to lease the lands in such reserves for agricultural, grazing, or other purposes, having considered the same, report thereon, with a recommendation that it do pass without amendment.

This bill was introduced at the request of the Secretary of the Interior, as set forth in his letter dated April 20, 1935, a copy of which is appended hereto and made a part of this report, as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
Washington, April 20, 1935.

Hon. ELMER THOMAS,
Chairman Committee on Indian Affairs,
United States Senate.

MY DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: There is transmitted herewith a draft of proposed legislation which it is desired to have enacted in order to facilitate the administration of reservoir sites and other lands withdrawn in connection with Indian irrigation projects, which lands are not a part of any Indian reservation.

The proposed legislation, if enacted, would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to grant concessions on reservoir sites and other lands in connection with Indian irrigation projects. The conditions obtaining on lands reserved for reservoirs, canals, or flowage areas outside of Indian reservations, are different from the conditions existing on regular Indian reservations. There are regulations based on existing legislation for granting concessions on Indian reservations, but there is no authority of law for the Secretary to grant concessions on reserves for irrigation purposes when such reserves are not a part of an Indian reservation.

The tract of land reserved for reservoir purposes in connection with the Coolidge Dam and the San Carlos Reservoir in Arizona may be cited as one instance where there is a need of authority to grant concessions. There are now pending before

this Department numerous applications for concessions on that site and there will doubtless be similar applications from time to time on other areas reserved under similar conditions in connection with the various irrigation projects.

In addition to the need of authority to grant concessions on such reserves, there is also a need of authority for the Secretary of the Interior to lease such lands for agricultural, grazing, or other purposes, whenever it may be practicable to do so without interfering with the operation of the project. The reserves in connection with the Fort Hall project in Idaho may be cited as an instance where the leasing of lands is particularly desirable.

The tentative draft submitted has been prepared with the idea in mind of combining both of these features in one legislative act. Similar legislation was under consideration by the Seventy-third Congress (S. 1890 and H. R. 5903). The Acting Director of the Bureau of the Budget advises that so far as the financial program of the President is concerned, there is no objection to the proposed legislation. I recommend the enactment thereof.

Sincerely yours,

HAROLD L. ICKES,
Secretary of the Interior.

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