

INSPIRG

IOWA STUDENT PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP

June 26, 1975

TO: Members of the Ledges Coalition

RE: Update

There have been 3 major developments on the Ledges issue since the last letter:

1. Tom Harkin has approached Neal Smith for support of an appropriation for the barrier dike at the Ledges. Harkin said he got the impression that Smith was not so much opposed to a barrier dike as he was opposed to the people who were for the barrier dike. Reportedly, Smith doesn't like environmentalists (us). Smith also pooch-pooched the support of labor, teachers, farmers, and womens groups, indicating the opinion that it is easy to get those groups (you) to endorse anything. I don't know what to say to that--perhaps you do. Harkin is now trying to get Smith out to the Ledges so Smith can better understand the problem at the park.
2. The Corps of Engineers has submitted their plans--still unchanged from over a year ago--to the State government for comment before these plans are taken to Congress for approval. The plan calls for increasing the outflow from Saylorville from 8,000 cfs to 12,000 cfs. This does nothing to save the Ledges, but does create some excess flooding downstream, creating the need to buy 3,000 acres of land either outright or on an easement basis--making a "greenbelt" which the Iowa Conservation Commission is hoping to manage.

The best thing that the State could do would be to tell the Corps that these plans are inadequate, and to endorse a dike instead. That's not going to happen, however, since the Cons. Commission wants the greenbelt. The next best thing would be for the state to tell the Corps the plans are inadequate, and to come up with something else--that something being unspecified. I think we might be able to get Governor Ray to go this far. The worst thing that could happen would be approval of the Corps' plans. There will be a public hearing on what the State should do on this matter on Wednesday, July 2nd, at 10:00 a.m. at the Savory Hotel in Des Moines. If you can be there to express your position, we'd appreciate it.

3. The Johnston City Council has begun to get upset about the effects on that city of the increased outflow proposed by the Corps. We

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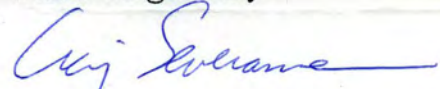
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are going to be speaking at their Council meeting tonight (Thursday), and will ask them to contact the Governor and Congressman Smith with their concerns. This development is significant as it marks the first group other than groups concerned about saving the Ledges that has expressed disfavor with the Corps plans. It is fortunate that it is also an official governmental body.

We will try to keep you posted on more developments as they occur. If you know of something which we might not know about, please let us know as well.

Warm Regards,



Craig Severance
Chair, ISPIRG Save the
Ledges Committee