Publication of all or any part permitted with credit to OWAA.

As a thought, if there is no ready opportunity to do the articles for state-wide use I mentioned, you might see an opportunity to print this "Policy Statement," and with editorial comment, stress those sections you find in it that apply to the present program you face.

There will be a move when Congress convenes to have this adopted as a joint resolution. I don't have much hopes but the move will be made.

There are 2000 columnists, editors, other writers and publicists members of the OWAA spread all over the country. As another thought, if your people could endorse this Policy, there might be a very effective tie-in for publicity on a national basis over the issues in the present McKay and state plan that are directly linked with this Policy. In effect this whole group of writers has opposed the trans-basin idea, the invasion of parks, and so on, and the present program could become a national issue, with widespread discussion and probably protests in the right places.

AHC
A NATIONAL WATER POLICY

(Editor's Note: Herewith we present A Water Use Policy adopted at the annual business meeting of the OWAA held in Missoula, Montana Wednesday, July 22, 1953. Sponsored by the Western Division of the OWAA a committee headed by ARTHUR H. CARHART of Denver, Colorado worked for six months to establish a basic water policy that would be not only applicable universally, but would also establish a blueprint within which future water use legislation must fall. It is an entirely new approach to what has become the Number One conservation problem in America today. Before reaching the present text, the wording was revised many times by the committee itself, had a thorough additional revision by the OWAA Resolutions Committee and final amendments from the floor as the Water Use Policy Code was finally adopted by the OWAA membership in annual business meeting.)

The Water Policy Committee, Outdoor Writers Association of America, Western Division, submits herewith its statement of what it regards as primary and fundamental precepts in shaping a water management and use policy for not only the United States but at least for the North American Continent. We believe these are so basic in approaching water resource conservation they can apply universally.

Many prior studies by various groups have been overly concerned with administrative organization, special phases and in some measure influenced by specialized backgrounds in law, engineering or comparable training and experience. It has been our objective to present concepts and considerations that lie at the very foundation of all ramifications and phases of water conservation and use. We have tried to present the factors of primary policy as citizens, concerned with the conservation of natural resource wealth of which water is a major segment, and without bias, coloring or over-emphasis on any area of the problems or the policies that should govern in managing our water resources.

These are the precepts we believe are universally primary and fundamental in shaping a national water policy.

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1. WATER IS ONE OF THE ESSENTIALS FOR LIFE ON EARTH. It is as indispensable as air, sunlight and soil. The best and wisest use of our water wealth concerns all citizens.

2. THE MANAGEMENT OF WATER AND SOIL ARE INSEPARABLE IF WE ARE TO SECURE THE GREATEST SERVICE FROM BOTH. We have wasted and abused the soil-water complex. National and individual survival dictates the necessity for applying a sound, universal policy to sound soil and water management.

3. WATER IS BASIC WEALTH. The nation's wealth is not gold or currency, but the resources which include the real wealth of soil and water.
4. WATER IS MOBILE. From arrival on the earth's land masses it continually moves toward rejoining the oceans. Such uses as it may serve occur at some point along this "line of transit".

5. WATER IS COMMUNITY WEALTH. By its very nature, its constant movement, no statutory law can controvert this fact of natural law, that water evaporates, seeps, flows, inexorably, to rejoin the "community bank account" in water.

6. A RIGHT TO USE WATER WEALTH CAN BE GRANTED BY THE SOVEREIGN STATE OR STATES WHICH ARE, IN FACT, THE PEOPLE. Through democratic processes, the people retain the right to determine how this part of their wealth shall be utilized to return to the citizenry, the greatest good for the greatest number.

7. THE RIGHT TO USE WATER DOES NOT CARRY WITH IT THE RIGHT TO ABUSE OR MIS-USE IT. Inherent in the granting of a right to make use of water resources are two fundamentals; that insofar as feasible, the integrity of the water shall be maintained after use so it may further serve, and that the use made of the water shall constitute the most valuable use of this resource.

8. COMPLETE UTILIZATION OF WATER WEALTH DEMANDS PUTTING IT TO PRODUCTIVE USE, IN ALL PHASES OF COORDINATED USES, THROUGHOUT THE LINE OF TRANSIT. To secure this greatest return from water resources, over-all planning and management must begin with the arrival of the raindrop on the land mass.

9. THE GRANTING OF A PRIORITY AND MONOPOLISTIC RIGHT BY STATUTE, DECREES, COMPACT OR OTHER ACTION, TO A DOWN-STREAM ENTITY, WHICH PUTS SUCH ENTITY IN A POSITION TO DEMAND RELEASE OF WATER FROM HIGH UP ON THE LINE OF TRANSIT TO SATISFY THE DOWN-STREAM RIGHT, WITHOUT FIRST SECURING PRODUCTIVE USE HIGHER ON THE LINE OF TRANSIT, DENIES THE PRINCIPLE OF SECURING ALL-INCLUSIVE USE AND SERVICE THROUGHOUT THE LINE OF TRANSIT and is, therefore, inimical to the public good.

10. EVERY USE OF WATER CONTRIBUTING TO THE PUBLIC WEAL MUST HAVE EQUAL RIGHT FOR MAKING CLAIM TO ITS PROPER ALLOCATION OF WATER; NO ONE USE CAN BE GIVEN SUCH OVER-RIDING MONOPOLY THAT OTHER GOOD USES MAY NOT HAVE JUST CONSIDERATION IN WATER-USE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT.

11. THE ASSIGNMENT OF USE RIGHTS OR PRIVILEGES IN WATER MUST BE MADE ON THE BASIS OF RETURNING TO THE CITIZENRY, THE GREATEST INCLUSIVE PRODUCTIVITY IN MANAGEMENT OF THE RESOURCE. At some point any good use may procure for the public, a greater return in values than the same amount of water demanded by other important uses. To secure the wisest return from water wealth, there must be a balanced, all-use plan of utilization, so the aggregate shall be the utmost in values derivable from the resource.

12. A "FIXED" OR "FROZEN" SCALE OF PRIORITIES IN WATER USE DOES NOT PERMIT THE NECESSARY FLEXIBILITY OF ADJUSTMENT TO NEEDS AND DEMANDS ON THE RESOURCE. It is recognized that domestic uses in their support of daily living assume a natural priority. The production of food and fiber is hardly less important than domestic use. However, such values as power production and many phases of recreational enjoyment may be derived from water, without depreciating either domestic or food production uses of water. The priority scale should not be so frozen as to prevent these coordinate, non-damaging uses of water prior to domestic, agricultural, or any other segment of complete utilization.
13. THE WATERSHED OF ANY STREAM IS THE PRIMARY AREA IN WHICH WATER MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL MUST BE APPLIED. The natural facilities for storage of water in ground reserves, the prevention of floods as against letting them form and then trying to control them, the maintenance of more uniform stream flow and many coordinate benefits lie in managing the soil-water complex throughout the entire drainage basin of a stream. Action, effort, funds should be allotted to this fundamental step and watershed management should have precedence ahead of constructional, mechanical water-management features lower down on the line of transit.

14. A FLOOD IS THE MOST DYNAMIC DEMONSTRATION OF LACK OF WATER MANAGEMENT. Beyond all damage done by water out of control is the loss of the resource from the upper basin areas without it serving primary uses and producing values within the area where it arrives on the land mass.

15. IT FOLLOWs THAT A POLICY OF SOUND WATER MANAGEMENT WILL DRIVE FIRST AT PREVENTING FLOODS THROUGH INCREASING WATER RETENTION ON AND IN THE LAND, AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE TO WHERE PRECIPITATION REACHES THE LAND MASS.

16. DAMS HAVE A PLACE IN WATER MANAGEMENT AND UTILIZATION BUT ARE SECONDARY TO MORE FUNDAMENTAL WATER CONSERVATION MEASURES THAT EXIST POTENTIALLY IN WHAT IS GENERALLY TERMED "SOIL CONSERVATION". The impounding dam for whatever purpose, can serve best and for far longer time, if the foundation of continuing water delivery, in more moderate flow, is established by good soil-water management practices on the watershed. It is practically certain, that if watersheds were managed to produce a more constant flow of high usable, silt-free water, there would be much less need for the gigantic dam down stream.

17. DAMS, DIKES, CHANNEL DREDGING AND SIMILAR CONSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES GENERALLY CONSIDERED AS "FLOOD CONTROL", ARE DIRECTED TOWARD TREATING A CONDITION THAT RESULTS FROM A CAUSE WITHOUT MUCH EFFECT IN CURING THE CAUSE OF FLOODS. The cause of floods lies in the inability of collecting basins to absorb a large part of heavy, periodic precipitations, to delay runoff so flood crests will not form. Policy and action which follows a thesis that floods shall be allowed to build to their higher destructive volumes in main stream channels and then be controlled by constructional facilities, is irrational. The logical approach is to prevent, so far as possible, the precipitous runoff from collecting basins through greater retaining and retarding qualities on the watershed; prevent floods from forming instead of letting them do so and only then trying to control them. Treating a watershed to achieve these goals is treating the cause of floods—while construction controls down stream are mere pallatives. It is true, however, that there may be local calamities resulting in floods beyond the control of man by any known techniques.

18. IRRIGATION IS A USE OF WATER: IRRIGATION SCHEMES THAT INVOLVE GIGANTIC ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTIONAL FEATURES, REQUIRE EXPENDITURES OF FANTASTIC FUNDS, AND CAN BE JUSTIFIED ONLY BY INFLATED CLAIMS OF "BENEFITS" AND RELY ON OTHER ELEMENTS IN THE SCHEMES FOR "JUSTIFICATION" ARE QUESTIONABLE. The cost per acre irrigated is fantastic in many projects currently proposed. The claim that these additional acres must be put under irrigation to meet future demands for farm products, regardless of costs and actual big subsidies, is spurious. The chance of adequately supplying the nation's needs in food and fiber lies in increasing the productivity of the 510,000,000 acres of existing cropland, and rehabilitating the 100,000,000 acres on which productivity has been damaged or lost. Genuine irriga-
tion projects, bringing land into tillage at reasonable costs per acre should be developed; those that get out of bounds in their super-engineering features, are merely masquerading as irrigation projects, are out of bounds in sound natural resource management.

19. **THE CITIZENRY MUST BE TOLD IN ADVANCE THE WHOLE TRUTH CONCERNING GREAT CONSTRUCTIONAL PROJECTS WHICH WILL BE PAID FOR, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY BY THE CITIZENS.** Presentations of projects to the public and their representing officials that do not disclose relevant details cannot be tolerated. Over-playing "benefits" of a project, glossing over losses, underestimating costs to get initial approval with ultimate costs multiplying unreasonably, keeping serious errors from general public knowledge, as has happened in actions of some public agencies, cannot be tolerated. Every project must be based on current and thorough studies. The public is too vitally concerned with what is done with and to the water resource to be misled or treated evasively by their servants dealing with our water wealth.

20. **THE ROBBING OF ONE RIVER BASIN OF WATER BY OUT-OF-BASIN DIVERSIONS TO ANOTHER DRAINAGE SHOULD NOT BE APPROVED EXCEPT WHERE THOROUGH AND COMPLETE STUDIES SHOW THAT SUCH A DIVERSION DEFINITELY WILL PRODUCE BENEFITS OVER YEARS OF THE FUTURE OF GREATER VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE THAN IF THE WATER RESOURCE CONTINUES TO FOLLOW its ORIGINAL, NATURAL LINE OF TRANSIT.** It is against the public interest to design and construct great trans-basin diversions for immediate needs, because of political pressures and related campaigning for such a diversion, where future needs and demands on water in the natural basin will return more to the state, region and nation in the future.

21. **NO POTHOLE, SWAMP OR MARSH AREA SHOULD BE DRAINED UNTIL THERE IS A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF ITS VALUE AS A NATURAL FACILITY FOR MAINTAINING WATER LEVELS, ACTING AS AN EQUALIZING FACILITY IN STREAM FLOW, AND ITS PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY IN WILDLIFE AND OTHER VALUE IF RETAINED IN ITS NATURAL STATE.**

22. **THERE SHOULD BE MORE EMPHASIS ON CONSERVATION OF THE GROUND WATER RESOURCE WHICH IS GREATER THAN SURFACE WATER OF ALL TYPES.** The need for instituting necessary conservation measures bearing on ground water and its uses is immediate and mandatory.

23. **POLLUTION OF WATER BY ANYONE CONSTITUTES DESTRUCTION OF WEALTH BELONGING TO ALL; A THEFT FROM THE COMMUNITY TREASURY.** While a certain amount of pollution is inescapable in an industrial age, the integrity of water must be maintained when it is in use. The governing precept must be to insist that those who make any use whatsoever of water resources, return any unconsumed water to the general "water bank account" in such a condition that all possible additional uses may be protected and maintained farther along the line of transit. Minimizing pollutions is a high level of enlightened self interest.

24. **NATIONAL PARKS AND MONUMENTS, AND DESIGNATED "WILDERNESS AREAS", BEING DEDICATED TO PRESERVING IN AS NATURAL A STATE AS POSSIBLE, THE NATURAL CONDITIONS AND FEATURES WITHIN THESE AREAS, MUST NOT BE LOST OR DEGRADED IN THEIR HIGHEST HUMAN SERVICE VALUES BY CONSTRUCTION WITHIN THEM OF DAMS OR THE BACKING UP OF IMPOUNDED WATERS WITHIN THEIR BOUNDARIES BY DAMS OUTSIDE THE AREAS.** This is an example of water use, in itself not decreasing volume or usability. It can serve recreational uses of the highest value, if allocated to that service, at that point in its line of transit. Its wholly unaltered, natural state and volume after recreational use, can serve all other uses downstream without hindrance or loss to economic needs.
25. IN ALL WATER DEVELOPMENT OR USE PROJECTS, THAT AFFECT WILDLIFE RESOURCES, IN SOME WAYS BENEFICIALLY, AND MORE OFTEN ADVERSELY, THERE MUST BE STUDY BY QUALIFIED MEN FROM THE FIRST INITIATION OF PROJECT, COINCIDENT WITH ALL PHASES OF PLANNING, NOT ONLY TO SALVAGE ALL WILDLIFE VALUES THAT CAN BE RETAINED UNDER CHANGED ENVIRONMENT RESULTING FROM THE CONSTRUCTIONAL INSTALLATIONS, BUT POSITIVELY TO SECURE ALL POSSIBLE WILDLIFE VALUES INHERENT IN THE INSTALLATION OF CONSTRUCTIONAL FEATURES. That is, there must not only be the underwriting of wildlife values which come as a matter of course in the installation of dams and reservoirs, but there must be planned utilization of those factors created by the installation which, by a bit of cost and effort, may get from the project all possible wildlife values. The maintenance of the wildlife resource and its recreational and related values is of paramount importance in retaining hunting and fishing as part of the American scene. Beyond this, and in addition, hunting and fishing underwrite a $9,000,000,000 segment of national business each year and as a matter of sound economy, the wildlife that underwrites this business not only must be maintained, but increased however possible within reason. Therefore, all wildlife production potentials must not be regarded merely as incidental to major water development projects, but as an integrated and essential part of the project and provided for as a genuine objective in planning and management of all other features.

26. WE HOLD THAT THE LAWS, COMMISSIONS, AGENCIES AND ALL OTHER OF THE MULTIPLECTY IN ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED FACTORS, ARE OF SECONDARY CONSIDERATION IN THE FORMATION OF AN EFFECTIVE WATER POLICY. WE HOLD THAT NATURAL LAW, WHOLLY IMUTABLE, TAKES PRECEDENCE; THAT COMMON SENSE AND JUSTICE MUST GOVERN, AND THAT THE MUCH-NEEDED REVISION OF BOTH LAW AND ADMINISTRATION, WHICH ARE PREEMINENTLY BACKWARD-LOOKING, WILL Emerge LOGICALLY, AS THE SOUND OVER-RIDING POLICY IS APPLIED AND DEVELOPED. POLICY IS FUNDAMENTAL, NATURAL LAW; FACILITIES IN WATER MANAGEMENT DICTATE POLICY TO NO SMALL DEGREE, AND THERE MUST BE REVISION OF STATUTORY LAW AND ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION TO WORK CONSTRUCTIVELY ON A FOUNDATION OF SOUND POLICY OR THE PRESENT CONFUSION, CONFLICT, HEDGE-PODGE DEVELOPMENT CAN DO NOTHING BUT LEAD THE NATION INTO DIFFICULTIES IN RELATION TO WATER WEALTH, AND BRING US TO FINAL DISASTER THROUGH MISMANAGEMENT OF THAT COMMUNITY WEALTH.

Respectfully submitted,

WATER POLICY COMMITTEE
Western Division,
Outdoor Writers Association of America
Missoula, Montana, July, 1953.

The Committee:
Weldon Heald
Ken McLeod, Jr.
Fred Peterson
Jim Thomas
John Willard
Arthur Carhart, Chairman

Respectfully submitted,

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