

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

For Release on Delivery 3:30 p.m. EDT, July 26, 1976

INTERIOR SEEKS BALANCED LAND USE AND STATE COOPERATION, KLEPPE SAYS

The Interior Department, Nevada's largest land manager, is seeking to reconcile legitimate pressures by commercial and environmental interests for the maximum public benefit, Secretary of the Interior Thomas S. Kleppe said in Reno today.

"Cattlemen and other commercial interests wishing to utilize our public lands and our natural resources exert a great deal of pressure and make convincing arguments--the American people need the energy, food and product which can be produced from the public lands," Kleppe said in remarks to the Nevada Wildlife Federation. "On the other side of the issue, environmental groups put equally convincing demands on the Government to force other uses of certain public lands.

"The Department of the Interior is one of the main points where these demands collide, where the pressures are the greatest."

Kleppe said Nevada has not been singled out for intensive range management, and that sound grazing management principles will be applied in Nevada under the same systems worked out for all such lands managed by the Department.

He said he does not intend to seek any Federal legislation "that would in any way provide authority for Federal regulation of wildlife on the public lands." The States, he said, would continue to regulate hunting, fishing and trapping on Federal lands except as modified by Federal laws such as the Endangered Species Act, the Wild Horse and Burro Act, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Maximum cooperation with State officials continues to be Interior's policy embodied in its regulations, Kleppe declared. He cited as examples the cooperative agreements signed with 11 States for administration of endangered species programs.

The text of Secretary Kleppe's remarks is attached.

x x x