

# Lower Cape Selectmen Dislike New Park Bill

## Assert Not Enough Land Excluded in Measure

Reactions ranging from disappointment to disgust were expressed today by officials of Lower Cape towns on the latest move in Washington regarding the proposed Cape Cod National Seashore Park filing of a new bill in the Senate by Massachusetts Senators Saltonstall (R.) and Smith (D.).

Most of those commenting on the new proposal to eliminate some 1,500 acres from the original park boundaries expressed highly unfavorable opinions.

General opinion was that the Saltonstall-Smith bill is doing very little to aid the towns in their attempts to eliminate or offset substantial tax revenue losses as a result of Federal acquisition of land for a national seashore park, and provide for future residential expansion.

### Actions Recounted

Under the terms of the original bill each town would have been allowed to utilize 10 percent of the total area taken from the town for future residential development. Because this particular phase of the bill was not favored by the National Park Service officials and because it was felt that it would be difficult to administer, the towns got together and revised the park boundaries so that approximately 10 percent of the area in each town was eliminated before enactment by Congress.

This compromise received the staunch support of Representative Hastings Keith who refiled his original bill soon after the new Congress convened, but at the same time pledged his support to the boundaries changes as outlined by the various towns involved directly in the park proposal.

The Saltonstall-Smith measure eliminates less than 5 percent of the total proposed park area, however, instead of the 10 percent that had previously been agreed upon at House and Senate hearings held in Washington in June.

Original proposed park boundaries encompassed some 31,206 acres in Provincetown, Truro, Wellfleet, Eastham, Orleans, and Chatham. The new bill filed by Senators Saltonstall and Smith would eliminate 1,518 acres, slightly less than 5 percent from this total.

### Draws Comparison

In Wellfleet, one of the towns which would suffer most from the extensive land losses and the resultant losses in real estate tax revenue, Charles E. Frazier Jr., until yesterday chairman of the board of selectmen, expressed his dissatisfaction with the new proposal by saying, "It's like throwing a bone to a dog, but only after you have made sure there is no meat on it."

"No one has seen the bill yet so we don't know exactly what they are proposing to eliminate. However, from newspaper reports it appears they plan to eliminate about 300 acres in Wellfleet to the east of Herring River.

"We had expected that about 800 acres of the 8,000 they proposed to take would be eliminated from the park. Maybe they think they are making some concession, but 300 acres instead of 800 doesn't seem like much of a concession to me."

Mr. Frazier said that from published reports it appears that the land they plan to eliminate from the park is land situated on the east side of Herring River, most of which is property of the Chiquessett Country Club and completely unsuitable for residential development.

"This land is no good to the park and it's no good to the town for future residential expansion. It looks to me as if our senators are trying to make a gesture, but it's not a very generous one," the Wellfleet official said.

### Reaction Is Calmer

In Orleans the reaction was not quite so strong. Selectman Arthur Finlay pointed out that Orleans had asked no boundary changes, but had strongly supported the requested changes made by the other five towns involved.

"We are concerned about the amount of land to be taken from the other towns and we have sup-

ported their proposed boundary revisions," he said. "In Orleans the proposed park would not cut into taxable property as in other towns because of the land they want to take is already owned by the town."

"We are interested, however, in seeing that the original provisions which give the town the right to decide at a town meeting whether or not to give up the land for the park is retained."

Eastham Selectman Luther Smith said his board had not discussed the new proposal to any great length because members did not know just what was to be left out of the original park boundaries.

"We telephoned Congressman Keith in Washington and asked him to send a copy of the bill so we could determine just what they plan to eliminate," Mr. Smith said.

He said that published reports of the Saltonstall-Smith bill indicate that about 500 acres are to be eliminated in the North Eastham area, but that the Eastham officials do not know whether this 500-acre cut is in the Schoolhouse Road area where there are approximately 50 dwellings, or whether it is the Cable Road area which is to the north and east of the M. F. Roach asphalt plant.

### Thought Program Fair

"We felt we presented a fair proposition in our boundary changes, one that would be suitable to the park and still be fair to the town. Personally I think they could have been a lot more liberal than they apparently have been," Mr. Smith added.

Chatham Selectman Robert McNeece also was critical of the new measure as it affects his town.

"The only concession made to Chatham," he said, "was that Morris and Stage Islands and Monomoy would be kept as nature sanctuaries so that they would attract very few visitors. If they intend to make it a nature sanctuary in an effort to discourage visitors, I wonder if they can really justify taking such valuable property—property which will be a real asset to the town?"

Mr. McNeece said that in his opinion it mattered little what use either Morris or Stage Islands were put to in any proposed park—that as long as the area is included within the park boundaries, for any reason, visitors will flock to the area.

"They will have to come 14 miles over narrow roads and through one of our finest residential areas. They will create deplorable traffic conditions which can only result in a depreciation of those residential areas through which the traffic flows."

### Dislikes Provision

"Our senators said in the news release explaining the new bill that their so-called concessions were an attempt to consider the growth needs of the towns and at the same time, to preserve the continuity of the park so necessary to proper administration and conservation. Having a section of the park which is not contiguous to the rest of the park and which is accessible only by traveling 14 miles over narrow winding roads does not seem like very wise planning to me."

The Chatham selectman also questioned whether they could rely on the Federal Government to keep its word that the area would be used only as a nature sanctuary.

"After all," he said, "when Monomoy was taken 17 years ago it was designated as a bird refuge and now the same department of the federal government is trying to make it into a national park for recreational purposes. How do we know that wouldn't