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Secretary of the Interior Cecil D. Andrus today urged the Senate Energy committee to adopt President Carter's recommendation to designate 92 million acres of federal lands in Alaska as new or expanded units of the National Park, Wildlife Refuge, Wild and Scenic River or National Forest systems.

"Through enactment of these proposals, we can be certain that the crown jewels of Alaska -- its most spectacular natural environments, recreation areas and wildlife habitats -- will remain intact for the benefit of our nation's citizens," Andrus said.

"It is only in Alaska -- out of all our great nation -- where we can still see land much as the first migrants across the Bering Sea from Asia must have seen it tens of thousands of years ago," Andrus told the committee.

The recommendations would add about 45 million acres to the National Park system in 13 units and about 42 million acres to the Wildlife Refuge systen1 in 13 units. In addition about 3 million acres will be added to the Tongass and Chugach national forests in Southeast and Southcentral Alaska, and 33 rivers with a total area of about 2.3 million acres will be added to the Wild and Scenic River System.

The House Interior Subcommittee on General Oversight and Alaska Lands began marking up similar legislation this week.

The recommendations offered by Andrus today stem from Section 17(d)(2) of the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act which directed the Secretary of the Interior to nominate land in Alaska for inclusion in the four conservation systems. The act set a deadline of the end of 1978 for Congressional action on the Secretary's recommendations.

In his testimony, Andrus noted that there were "hard decisions," over the classification of certain areas. But, he said, the decisions "reflect my best judgment."

He also said they reflect "the Interior Department's, and this Administration's commitment to protect Alaskan wildlands while remaining sensitive to Alaska's and the Nation's need to own and develop resources."