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LB 243

there should be no serious objection and several years ago when we discussed the issue I thought it ought to almost happen automatically, that we would take away that authority. Now there comes a very real problem that is just with the Natural Resource Districts. Much of the responsibility of the Natural Resource Districts has been concentrated in the area of flood control. As a natural result of the control of floods, runoff dams are built. A natural result of impoundment of water is, whenever you have a puddle of water big enough to float on, swim in, fish in, wade in, water ski on some individual is going to want to take part of that. There is nothing really wrong with that. So it was felt by this Legislature that there ought to be the opportunity for the Natural Resource Districts and sometimes in cooperation with Game and Parks the opportunity to develop those projects for recreational purposes for the benefit of the public. Since public funds were expended we ought to be able to achieve maximum use. I have been here now in my thirteenth year. I was here when the Natural Resource Districts were organized. As I recall, it was the intent of the Legislature to create the districts for the primary purpose of conserving soil and water. The secondary benefits, recreation, were appreciated but it was not the intent of the Legislature, it was not the intent of the body as I recall, that we use the Natural Resource Districts as a principal vehicle for providing recreation for the people of the State of Nebraska. It was felt, and I agree, that there are many multipurpose projects with those benefits that accrue to those projects, that can very well justify the expenditure of public funds, but to build a structure for recreational purposes alone with tax dollars and the taking of that property by eminent domain at a time when funds are in scarce supply almost flies in the face of reality. I might suggest to my good friends in the front row, Senator Higgins and Senator Labez, that the Papio Natural Resource District has some concern now about this project although they had originally voted in support of LB 243. It is not my intention to hamper the Natural Resource Districts from carrying out their legitimate responsibilities. If Senator Murphy were here, he would like to recount for you the construction of a tennis court by a Natural Resource District, hardly considered to be a soil or water conservation measure unless you consider that by covering the soil with concrete it is no longer going to blow away or wash away but not the principal purpose for which we were organized. There are other instances frequently, I should not say frequently, fortunately very few, but those instances are in every case an infringement upon an individual. I think it is important that we recognize that the State of Nebraska and the subdivision of government is in the peculiar position where, if I as a landowner