

**LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FOR:****November 8, 1999**

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**LAST WEEK -**

**PRESERVATION OF LOESS HILLS** - The National Parks and Public Lands Subcommittee (Chairman Hansen, R-UT) of the House Resources Committee held a hearing on Thursday, November 4, to discuss the preservation of the Loess Hills in western Iowa. Rep. Greg Ganske gave testimony on its beauty and uniqueness. He went on to say the Loess Hills region is a unique landform that ranges from one to fifteen miles wide and approximately 200 miles long. Rep. Ganske said the deep loess is found only two places in the world, one is western Iowa and the other the Yellow River Valley of China. He indicated that Loess Hills provides the opportunity to study the prairie as it was hundreds of years ago. Scientific research of the hills did not begin in earnest until the 1970's. He said that the unique plants and animals of the hills need to be preserved, so our children and their children can walk among the ancient hills and experience their majesty.

Maurice Welte, Chairman of the Loess Hills Alliance testified that today's Loess Hills are in jeopardy from fill dirt removal, indiscriminate development and other human impacts. He said development pressure is prevalent in most of this unique landform and lack of coordinated planning has led to scattered developments that are threatening the scenic views and delicate prairies. He indicated that the mission of the Loess Hills Alliance is to protect special natural and cultural resources while ensuring economic viability and private property rights of the region through the creation of a common vision for the Loess Hills. Mr. Welte went on to say that partnerships between federal and state government agencies, local property owners and regional organizations will help to identify, interpret and implement a plan to protect and preserve the Loess Hills for future generations.

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