

Preserve Pilot Knob

To the Editor of The Tribune:

Many Ames citizens may be unaware of a situation which threatens a unique natural area in Iowa, Pilot Knob State Park. This small park, located near Forest City, has features which can be found nowhere else in the state and which are of profound interest to biological and geological scientists as well as to all nature lovers. Within this area are found the third highest point in the state and the only sphagnum bog known to exist in the state. Several species of plants and at least one species of animal are found nowhere else in Iowa. One of the plants is the fascinating sundew, which feeds on insects.

On May 11, a meeting will be held in Mason City for the purpose of determining whether or not the park should be developed as a ski area. Such development would necessitate the clearing of runs down the wooded slopes and the installation of a ski lift. Pilot Knob State Park is a small area and, from an ecological standpoint, represents a habitat type of a relatively delicate nature. Excessive and improper use would, in effect, ruin the biological assets which make the park unique. The park was originally set aside with the avowed intent of preserving the natural beau-

ty of the area.

From a historical standpoint, Pilot Knob was a landmark which was used by the pioneers as they headed westward. This accounts for its name.

Persons who would like to see Pilot Knob State Park preserved may write to the State Conservation Commission before the May 11 meeting. Letters or other communications may be directed to:

Mr. Everett Speaker, Director
State Conservation Commission
East 7th and Court Streets
Des Moines, Iowa

The Iowa Nature Conservancy and the Iowa Division of the Izaak Walton League have taken a stand against the development of the park as a skiing center. Skiing facilities might well be constructed on adjacent privately owned lands. As custodians of our natural resources, it is our duty to see that future generations of Americans may still see some unspoiled vestiges of a once magnificent wilderness.

Pressures are strong for the commercial development of Pilot Knob as a skiing area. Those who oppose this move should make their opinions known—NOW!

Mrs. James H. Elwell
2901 Arbor St.