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TULSA, Okla., March 13 --- U.S. Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kans.) tonight urged members of the Arkansas Basin Development Association to "protect the environmental resources of the area which the Association has labored to develop."

A member of the Air and Water Pollution subcommittee of the Senate Public Works Committee, Dole was the featured speaker at the Association's annual meeting held in the Mayo Hotel.

Dole praised the Association's success in "utilizing the Arkansas River Basin's resources, and at the same time creating a transportation link vital to commercial and industrial growth." "Now, as industry takes advantage of the inexpensive transportation, open spaces, power development and of its desirable features in general, the basin's resources will be threatened as they never were while in their undeveloped state," Dole predicted.

"The consequences of industrial and economic development of the region must now be one of the Association's main concerns," he said. "The same regional-type planning used for the basin project," he said, "must now be applied toward combatting environmental degradation."

"Cooperation and action are needed from all levels of government and from the private sector. Due to the Association's influential role in affecting the area's future, however, the ABDA has both the responsibility and opportunity to become not only a developer but a guardian of the region's precious and irreplaceable resources," Dole said.