

Save the Red River

A spirited group of Kentuckians appeared in Washington this week in an effort to save the beautiful gorge of the Red River in their state from being flooded out. Theirs is a gallant last stand, and it must not fail.

Congress has already authorized the Army Corps of Engineers to build a dam in the gorge. Last year's budget contained \$330,000 to begin construction, but the Bureau of the Budget embargoed the use of the money because of the Federal Government's current fiscal squeeze. (Even the Vietnam war has some beneficent byproducts.) But the budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1 still allocates \$800,000 for construction. This is the item which the citizens' groups from Kentucky urged the House and Senate appropriations subcommittees to delete.

There is hope of success because Representative Watts, Kentucky Democrat, whose district the dam is intended to benefit, has indicated a willingness to accept another site further downstream if that is agreeable to the Corps of Engineers. A dam at the alternate site would not back water into the gorge.

Kentuckians have rallied to save the gorge, but all Americans have an interest in protecting this scenic treasure from a totally unnecessary act of destruction.