

available to all of the forty-eight Game and Fish Commissions in the entire United States. Already most of these states who have inaugurated radio communications are having trouble with interference from other states. There is a need now to ask the Federal Communications Commission to split these frequencies and to assign other frequencies to Game and Fish Commissions.

It is my hope that at this meeting this organization will go strongly on record favoring such a move, and further, that the individual states make it known to the Federal Communications Commission that they desire and demand adequate transmission frequencies at this time, since there is a great likelihood that all channels will be reshuffled and reallocated in the very near future.

There is very little time left for you to act on this most important proposal.

LAW ENFORCEMENT IN RELATION TO OTHER CONSERVATION FUNCTIONS

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Laws as a means of protecting our fish and wildlife resources have long been recognized as conservation measures. In fact, laws regulating certain detrimental hunting and fishing practices pre-date conservation agencies in many states by more than one hundred years.

Georgia, on December 10, 1790, passed a law prohibiting the night hunting of deer with a gun by means of firelight and set the penalty at five pounds and 39 lashes for anyone caught breaking the law. In 1803 a similar law was passed in the Mississippi Territory along with a law which prohibited Sunday hunting.

Following these general laws, a trend to local game and fish laws affecting local areas was apparent for almost a century. In Alabama, which is probably typical of other Southeastern States, a total of 170 laws were passed prior to the establishment of the Department of Game and Fish in 1907. Of these 170 laws—163 applied to only one or two counties. One of the most significant of these was a law which required a non-resident to purchase a ten dollar non-resident license before he could lawfully hunt in Sumter County, Alabama. This law was the forerunner of hunting and fishing licenses within the State. Needless to say, very few fines were assessed for violations of these early laws, but they reveal that laws were believed essential in any conservation program even by our forefathers.

Only in more recent times have such activities as fish and wildlife research, development, management and education been incorporated in the conservation field. We all realize that a successful fish and wildlife program cannot be complete without these activities along with law enforcement, but any way you look at the picture, law enforcement personnel are still the basis of the nation's fish and wildlife conservation program. There may come a day when the law enforcement phase of the program can take a back seat, but that time has not arrived.

Just why is law enforcement essential to our present-day fish and wildlife program? I have often heard this question raised by uninformed sportsmen and, yes, even employees of a Fish and Wildlife Department. To answer this question, let us examine the following facts:

First—Law enforcement is the basis of revenue for a state's fish and wildlife program. We are all aware that the major portion of a department's revenue is derived from the sale of hunting, fishing and trapping licenses, and fines. Monies derived from these sources make the Game and Fish Division of Alabama one of the very few self-supporting agencies of the State. I am sure that this must be true in other Southeastern States as well.

We all know that law enforcement personnel are directly responsible for the monies received from fines, but how are they *directly* responsible for license monies? To answer this question, I will ask one of my own, "How many people in the southeast would buy a hunting, fishing, or trapping license if there were no law enforcement personnel to see that a penalty would be imposed if the license was not bought?" The answer is obvious—only a very few. Certainly not enough funds would be forthcoming to run the departments on the scale that they are now being operated.

Now, consider the Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson monies. These come from the Federal Government, and not many of us have ever stopped to think that law enforcement personnel are directly responsible for the amount that each State receives. These monies are prorated on the total area in square miles of a State and on the *total number of hunting and fishing licenses sold in that State*. Increased license sales entitle the State to a larger share, and in addition, provide the State with monies to match available Federal funds.

Second—Law enforcement is necessary to protect what we have and what we have developed.

No one can dispute the fact that conservation education can make the public conscious of the value of fish and wildlife services. We are not foolish enough to believe, however, that conservation education has progressed to the point that we can curtail our Law Enforcement Sections without seriously depleting fish and wildlife populations.

In Alabama, for example, even with the small number of law enforcement personnel now maintained, approximately 5,000 arrests are made each year for violation of fish, wildlife, and fur laws. And that 5,000 is just a drop in the bucket in relation to the number of violations that occur. Only a small percentage of the violators are ever caught, because our Conservation Officers are each required to patrol an area of approximately 562 square miles, *and no one officer can cover that large an area efficiently*.

Management areas cannot be developed with the hope of increasing our fish and wildlife supply without enforcement officers, for without them, even the brood stock would be destroyed in many areas before they could reproduce.

Earlier, I pointed out that through license sales, law enforcement aids in increasing Federal Aid funds. Now, I want to point out that people would not buy as much sporting equipment with a dwindling fish and wildlife population, which would result without law enforcement.

Third—Law Enforcement personnel can make the job of the technical staff much more effective.

Each of the Southeastern States covers quite a territory. It is impossible for the small staff of technically trained employees to cover a State thoroughly in checking wildlife problems, and putting wise conservation practices into use on a statewide basis. Law enforcement officers, although not technically trained, have a working knowledge of conservation procedures gained through experience, *and* they know the territory assigned to them and are familiar with the fish and wildlife found within their district. They also know the people who are interested in conservation of fish and wildlife.

Most of these men are anxious to cooperate in any way they can, and with a little instruction they can be a great help to the technicians. They are in the field every day and many wildlife problems come to their attention long before the biologists learn of them.

Law enforcement employees can be of invaluable assistance in gathering information on game inventories, game kill data, natural game foods available, *collecting needed specimens, and in numerous other ways*.

I realize that in any group of men you are bound to find a lemon once in a while, but I know that such lemons are scarce in our State, and I am sure this is true in other Southeastern States as well. Law enforcement men love their work, otherwise, they would not work for the small salary they receive.

In concluding, let us summarize—If it were not for the law enforcement personnel in the field to see that hunters and fishermen buy their licenses, license sales would take a tremendous drop. Without law enforcement, fines would

be non-existent. Without law enforcement, Federal Aid funds would be greatly reduced. These losses in revenue would greatly curtail research, development, management and education. Few Fish and Wildlife Departments could employ the technical staffs that they now maintain. So, we biologists are to a large extent dependent on law enforcement personnel.

I would like to point out that the law enforcement staff and technical staff are all working toward the same end. We biologists can make our jobs much easier through cooperation with these men, and most of them are anxious to cooperate if they know what we want. But remember two things:

If we expect cooperation on their part, we must do our part to cooperate with them whenever we can. Some technical employees believe that they should not assist law enforcement personnel as it might interfere with their obtaining necessary data. I cannot go along with this line of thought, but if you believe so, the least you can do is to go out with your law enforcement personnel, even though you only sit in the car and keep them company. We cannot expect all the cooperation to be on the part of our law enforcement officers.

And last, but not least, be quick to praise, but slow to criticize, as our Departments could not carry out an effective Game and Fish Conservation Program if it were not for our enforcement personnel.

GENERAL GAME SESSION

(Not all papers available)

PUBLIC HUNTING AREAS IN THE SOUTHEAST

LOUIS F. GAINNEY, *Chairman*, Florida

RAYMOND MOODY, Louisiana

ROLLAND HANDLEY, Mississippi

HAROLD WARVEL, Tennessee

The discussion briefly followed this order: (1) acquisition, (2) operation and administration. The members from each represented state on the panel described briefly their program and how it operated. There was little discussion on acquisition. The discussion soon came to checking stations. There was considerable discussion from the panel and audience about the need and value of checking stations.

The consensus of opinion was that checking stations were of value for collecting information, a public relations measure, and a selling point to the landowners. The disadvantages were cost of operations, difficulty of getting good checking station operators and once this system is started the public and landowners demand that it be kept in operation.

The information collected is kill data, hunting pressure, and specimens for aging game killed and food habits. Deer ages weights and food habits may be obtained from this system. The same data may be collected on turkeys in addition to sex and age ratios. The public relations point is controversial. This gives the state agency a good opportunity to pass out information that would not be available to all otherwise. In the minds of most hunters the checking stations are set up as a law enforcement tool and that it keeps the other hunters straight so therefore they are willing to abide by the law themselves. The landowners feel that it cuts down on timber and cattle theft and is therefore of value to them.

The opinion was that if you have it you will probably have to live with the checking stations but if you do not have this system, weigh all the pros and cons carefully before deciding.