

We are very fortunate in Arkansas in that only our Commission is empowered to make game and fish regulations. The Commission meets each month and can make any necessary changes, immediately. We have a policy whereby any proposed change, not of an emergency nature, is referred to a Regulations Committee for a months study before action by the Commission. This Committee consists of the Director, Chief Biologist, Chief of Enforcement, Commission Attorney and Education and Information Chief. After thorough discussion, the Committee will make recommendations to the Commission.

We also take up these proposed changes with our Enforcement personnel out in the state, as they know the existing field conditions better than anyone, and also know best whether a law will be workable or enforceable. We have around a thousand years of enforcement experience accumulated among these men and we would be foolish not to utilize this experience.

Because of public sentiment, we are unable to enact some regulations which would be most advantageous to the sportsman. However, we are making headway on these problems through our Education department's efforts, and through attendance at sportsmen's meetings and explaining the advantages to be gained. If a Conservation Department could have a complete new start, I believe that the best course to follow in setting up all regulations and laws governing wildlife would be to first obtain the best qualified foresters and game and fish biologists available. Have these men, along with the enforcement personnel of each locality, make a survey of existing field conditions concerning wildlife supply, at present, carrying capacity of the habitat, and improvements that can be feasibly made to increase the food and cover and carrying capacity for the most desirable species of wildlife. After this has been done, recommendations could be made to the law-making body, which ideally would be an independent Commission. The Education and Information division would disseminate the facts to all field personnel and to the public, explaining the conditions and goals. I firmly believe that *all* affected divisions of a department should be consulted on regulations, and most of all, the enforcement officer, who is the departments contact with the sportsman, should be convinced by the biologists that proposed regulations are based on accumulated facts, and not on suppositions or theories. Too often, no attempt is made to do this, resulting in a lack of cooperation between these two most important divisions.

I believe that if this course is pursued, the department will find that its laws and policies will be accepted by the sportsmen as sound and necessary to good hunting and fishing.

FEDERAL OFFICERS' VIEWS ON GAME AND FISH LAWS

By PAT W. CLOSE
U. S. Game Management Agent

Mr. Chairman, members of the Southeastern Game and Fish Commissioners and fellow sportsmen:

I am more than pleased to have been given the opportunity to discuss this subject in general, as viewed by a Federal Game Agent.

In addressing you today, I do so as a member of a profession I am happy to have been affiliated with for 21 years. Like others in conservation law enforcement, I am proud to identify myself as a law enforcement officer in the field of conservation, which I believe to be equal of other law enforcement agencies in importance of our man made laws. State game and fish laws and conservation problems are very important and near and dear to the hearts of all Federal Game Agents, for reason that we were all at one time State Game Wardens. To qualify for a position in our organization as game agents, we are required to have had at least four years general and specialized experience in conservation law enforcement. In jocular terms, we are often referred to as "Retired Game Wardens."

We are presently faced with a wave of lawlessness that has no precedent. It is not confined to any state, nor is its focal point in any particular group or

class of people. Contrary to more or less popular belief, it is not confined to old-time violators, who have successfully resisted all our efforts to change their ways and make them conservationists.

Education in itself is not the answer to conservation law violations. For example, on our highways, in spite of all the warning signs, grisly photographs, TV shows and lectures on the subject of traffic safety, we continue to kill and maim more of our people on our highways than ever before in history. It is the jail sentence and the loss of one's driver's permit that stops the drunken and reckless driver in his tracks. The same holds true with game and fish law violators. Strict enforcement, followed by court action with heavy fines, jail sentences and forfeiture of hunting and fishing licenses and the equipment used in the violations, have made more conservationists than all methods used.

True sportsmen have no objections to strict enforcement of the game and fish laws, in fact, the true sportsman will resent the laws not being enforced. Very few confirmed violators read conservation releases and attend conservation meetings. Their education in violations, generally begins as a boy, when with their Dad, they operated illegal fish traps, kill fawn and doe deer and trap wild ducks. So you can expect these boys to grow into manhood as game law violators.

I believe that with our fine state conservation departments working together as a unit such as this Southeastern Organization, and by forming a solid front that will tend to better protect our wildlife and fish, and will better solve our conservation problems.

Thank you, gentlemen.

THE JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT AND ITS JURISDICTION IN GAME AND FISH CASES

By T. C. HAND
Justice of the Peace
Bay Minette, Alabama

The Justice of the Peace Courts of Alabama have been cussed, discussed and ridiculed, more than any other court in the United States except the U. S. Supreme Court. But I have found when trouble strikes home the Justice Courts are the first ones to be called on.

This reminds me of an old Justice of the Peace who did not even have a Justice Code Book. To lend Authority to his court he covered a Sears-Roebuck Catalogue and had embossed Justice in Gold letters across the front. A defendant and his attorney appeared for trial and after hearing the evidence in the case, he opened his Justice Book and said, "I find you guilty and set your fine at \$4.98 plus cost. The defendant rose to protest as his lawyer pulled him down, saying, "Be quiet. Supposed he had opened that book at the wagon and buggy section!"

The Justice Courts have endeavored to work with the Conservation Department in violation of game and fish cases. We have trouble in Baldwin County with illegal electrocution of fish, outlawed fishing boxes and hunting protected game at night. To wit: deer.

There are a lot of cases where the Conservation Officer can bring a man into court at the time of arrest and he will enter a Plea of Guilty. Justice Courts are contactable 24 hours a day for any arrest the Department may have made.

If there were no Justice Courts in Alabama, I have been told by the Conservation Officers, it would work a hardship on him in the carrying out of their duties. Night hunting and electrocution of fish are two of the most uncalled for offenses we have to deal with in Baldwin County.

In Mobile County some time ago, some Conservation Officer came upon a white man riding on top of a car driven by his wife. He was holding a gun loaded with buckshot. When asked what he was doing up there he stated his wife ran him out of the car and he had to ride up there. He was charged with Hunting Protected Game at Night and was convicted of the offense.