

A number of socio-economic characteristics of private landowners were analyzed in order to help identify that sector willing to improve their lands for game. These landowners can be identified in two ways:

- (1) by the *percent* of landowners within each discrete variable willing to improve their lands for game, and
- (2) by the total *number* of landowners within each variable willing to do something for wildlife.

The former indicates the best individual prospect; the latter indicates the largest group of prospects.

The best individual prospect is a male landowner who:

owns 500 acres or more  
lives within 25 miles of his tract  
is less than 30 years old  
is in a professional occupation  
makes between \$5,000 and \$10,000 annually

The largest group of prospects are male landowners who:

own less than 100 acres  
live on their tract  
are in the 40-49 year age group  
are farmers  
make between \$1,000 and \$5,000 yearly

Both groups need to be reached, but it is obvious that different educational approaches will have to be used.

### SUMMARY

According to their owners, nearly all land holdings in the Tennessee Valley (99 percent) have some kind of game animal, most commonly the cottontail rabbit. Many owners recognize that game abundance is dependent upon land management activities which improve or degrade game habitat. A large group, however, assign great importance to abundance of predators and overharvesting to explain decreases.

A surprisingly high (43) percentage of owners do not know where to go for free professional advice or help regarding game.

Forty-one percent of the owners hunt. Sixty-nine percent allow hunting on their lands without qualification. Fifteen percent more would allow hunting if hunters asked permission. This means that over 26 million acres—85 percent of the total private land area studied—are actually or potentially open to hunting.

Twenty percent of the owners deliberately do something to increase game on their lands. Three-fourths of these provide food or cover. Others limit hunting, stock game, or control predators. Thirty-six percent are willing to improve their lands for game at their own expense if they are given free professional advice. Over three-fourths of the private corporate landowners are willing to improve their lands for game. Altogether over 21 million acres can be improved for wildlife.

Those willing to improve the land for game hold the key to wildlife development prospects in the Tennessee Valley.

## A POLICY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF STATE-OWNED FIELD TRIAL AREAS

R. H. CROSS, JR.

In 1965-66, 142 hunting dog field trials were held in Virginia and sportsman participation was estimated to be 42,600 man-days. Eighteen of these trials were held on State-owned lands and resulted in 3,800 man-days of recreation. Dog training accounted for another 300 man-days.

As additional State lands are acquired we will receive more requests

from organized groups to use these areas for field trials. This might appear undesirable to those who envision large expenditures for horse stables, dog kennels, club houses and the establishment of inviolate sanctuaries to assure an adequate supply of game for field trial purposes.

We have demonstrated in Virginia that excellent field trial grounds can be incorporated in most multiple-use wildlife management programs on public lands at minimum cost and without interference with normal hunting activities.

Field trials are staged for trail hounds, retrievers and pointing breeds. These classes might be further divided as follows:

#### *Trail Hound Trials*

##### 1. Fox Hound

Require the greatest amount of space, sometimes running over several hundreds of square miles with a hundred or more hounds released simultaneously. Practically nobody actually follows the chase. Participants, using automobiles, attempt to intercept the hounds as they cross roads. Occasionally a very few will use horse transportation. Trials are run on private lands and so far, we have had no requests from clubs for kennels and other facilities.

##### 2. Rabbit Hounds (Beagles)

In recent years the rabbit enclosure has become very popular, with clubs building their own. The area, of 80 to 150 acres, is surrounded by a rabbit-proof fence and, in short order, the cottontail population literally explodes. Then, the only problem is to guard against over-population which is usually followed by a tularemia epidemic and disastrous die-off.

In one instance our Commission has authorized a beagle club to construct a rabbit enclosure of 80 acres, clubhouse and dog kennels on State lands. Construction and maintenance must meet Commission standards and all facilities are made available to other clubs as well as individuals who wish to train dogs inside the enclosure.

##### 3. Coon Hounds

Owners of coon hounds comprise the largest group of field trialers in Virginia today. They stage night events, run on wild game, and sometimes spread over two or three counties. Drag races consist of a prepared scent trail with a caged raccoon in a tree at the finish line. Water races are currently the most popular and are exactly what the name implies. Here again, a caged raccoon is placed on a float, dragged across a pond ahead of the swimming dogs and then hoisted to the top of a pole at the end of the course. All three events are staged on private lands and waters with facilities being provided by the clubs.

##### 4. Retriever Trials

There are none in Virginia at present. Land trials require dogs to retrieve game (usually ringneck pheasants) which is shot. Water trials are essentially the same except dogs must swim to retrieve a scent stick or duck. In either trial, very little space is required.

##### 5. Pointing Dog Trials

Open to all pointing breeds with the English Setter and English Pointer by far the most popular.

The first pointing dog trial was run on the Greenlaw Plantation in the State of Tennessee in 1874. From 1874 until the 1950's these trials featured the "all-age" dog which was bred and trained to run out of the country and never look back. To run a dog of this type for one hour requires a good horse, two mounted scouts, a course four to five miles in length with a minimum width of one-half mile and 25 to 30 coveys of wild quail. There are probably no more than two dozen top-notch contiguous-course field trial areas in the United States. Notable ones are State-owned Hoffman in North Carolina and the State-managed Ames Plantation in Tennessee where the Grand National Championship is run annually in February. A contiguous-course area must have a minimum

of three, one-hour (five-mile) courses since the American Field rules prohibit the running of a recognized trial over any one course more than once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

All-age contiguous-course requirements have forced the majority of field trialers to accept the closer-ranging "horseback shooting dog" and resort to the equally acceptable "one-course field trial area." The former is a class gun dog whose owner can literally hunt all week and run in a field trial on the weekend. He need only to hunt intelligently, proudly, point with pride and be steady to wing and shot. He can be trained on the average quail hunting area. Depending upon topography and interspersions of hedgerows, woods and fields and water, an acceptable one-course field trial area can be developed on as little as 150 to 500 acres. Dogs are run over the same course every 30 minutes or one hour, depending upon length of heats, and they hunt pen-reared game. On a 30-minute course, 25-30 bobwhite quail are released prior to the beginning of the trial and then, two birds are released at the end of each heat, in which two dogs compete. The person in charge of stocking rides with the gallery behind the competing dogs and releases the birds for the next brace as he traverses the course.

And now we get down to the primary purpose of this paper. Read back and you will realize that the pointing dog enthusiast, while in the minority, must still depend a great deal upon the State if he expects to have a place to run his future field trials which are the foundation of outstanding pointing dog breeding in the United States, or for that matter, the world.

As employees of the States, it is our responsibility to chart a course of action based on something between the field trialer's desires and his actual needs. This, however, is nothing new because we are required daily to make decisions based on desires and actual needs of deer hunters, rabbit hunters, quail hunters and, you name it!

In these days of accelerated land acquisition programs made possible by funds from P-R, BOR, Appalachia Development, ASCS and undoubtedly others of which I am unaware, we have the opportunity as well as the responsibility of viewing new acres and planning their management in order to provide maximum recreation benefits for our hunter-sportsmen. We must train ourselves to recognize, not only the hunting potential but, the possibilities for developing a given tract to provide opportunity for all types of associated recreation including hunting dog field trials. It helps to remind ourselves that field trialers do not harvest game and, in measuring total output, we do not distinguish between types of recreation furnished.

### *Developing the Field Trial Area*

#### 1. Recognizing the Need

Obviously we do not initiate such projects unless somebody has expressed a desire for such a facility and has given reasonable assurance that use will justify our expenditures and efforts.

#### 2. Is Development Feasible?

We cannot afford the bulldozing and reclamation of vast forested areas to improve farm game hunting and/or establish field trial areas. Then, look for the tract which can be adapted for the purpose with the least amount of modification. If you do not trust your own judgment in the selection of the area, enlist the assistance of a professional field trial dog trainer; and two are better than one. Solicit their advice in planning improvements.

#### 3. Will it be a One-Course or Contiguous-Course Area?

Available land and its characteristics (topography, interspersions of fields, woods and water) will be the deciding factor. Do not feel badly if you must settle for the smaller area. Many people actually prefer a one-course trial because much of the running can be viewed from one spot, thus eliminating the need for following on horseback. You will also get more sportsman use because one-course trials consistently attract more people than do those which are run on larger areas.

#### 4. What Facilities Should be Provided?

The answer is none, unless they can serve dual or multiple purposes.

All-weather access, parking lots, stream crossings, hedgerow plantings, toilets and drinking water are examples of multi-purpose facilities.

Stables for horses and kennels for dogs are single purpose improvements and should be provided by the user. One notable exception is the farm building, acquired with the land and surplus to all other game management needs. In three instances, we have made such structures available to clubs for modification, maintenance and use in accordance with our specifications and standards.

Bobwhite quail and any other game used in field trials should be furnished by the user and, once released, all such game becomes the property of the State.

#### 5. Management of the Area

There is no place in our overall management program, nor is there any demonstrated need, for the single-purpose area. Field trial grounds are no exception.

Heretofore, it has been a rather widespread belief that field trials and hunting are incompatible and few things could be farther from the truth. In the first place, the majority of trials are run prior to and immediately following the general hunting season. One-course trials depend entirely upon released birds and hunting of wild game on the same area cannot possibly have any effect upon their success or failure. There might be contiguous-course trials run exclusively on native birds but, these are rare. Even on areas supporting maximum quail populations, you will find clubs supplementing with pen-reared stock in order to equalize various courses. Such trials, when run prior to the fall opening of the hunting season, can enjoy maximum native quail populations. These numbers will be lower the next spring regardless of whether or not the area is hunted and the release of pen-reared birds at this time is necessary to assure a successful event.

With the advent of the "Planning, Programming, Budgeting System" all of us have become acutely aware of the fact that we must explore every method of utilizing wisely, and to the fullest degree, every acre of land and water for which we are responsible. Hunting dog field trial areas are but one means of achieving the goal. They can be provided at minimum cost and without interference with normal hunting activities. In fact, developing a hunting dog field trial area involves so little additional effort and expense that such an area might be considered a bonus or fringe benefit to be derived from acquisition and management of almost any public hunting area. All that is really needed is the vision and imagination to see the potential that exists and to exploit it in drawing up your multi-purpose land management plan.

## THE QUANTICO STORY

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### INTRODUCTION

Quantico Marine Corps Schools is not only a very busy training base but an outstanding hunting and fishing area. It has a wider variety of game and fish available to the sportsman than any other military base in Virginia. With the exception of black bear, all big game and farm game species may be hunted. Game available include deer, turkey, quail, rabbits, squirrels, ruffed grouse, mourning doves, ducks and geese.

This paper deals with the results of five years of data collected, costs of game management and a breakdown of costs per hunter day on Quantico Marine Corps Schools.