

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

GEORGE C. MOORE

Looking at the program and the attendance here today I will not hesitate to say that this, the tenth annual conference of the Southeastern Association of Game and Fish Commissioners, will be the biggest, the most interesting and profitable conference this association has held. In all due respects to the first meeting, I believe, held in St. Petersburg, Florida, in 1947 when an annual PTA meeting was being held in the same hotel I believe you will have as much fun, see as many interesting sites and according to the program and what I have been told by those in charge of entertainment have plenty to keep you busy.

I have probably attended more of these meetings than any one else here and it is extremely gratifying to see an ever increasing attendance. I am sure this is due to the perspective that has occurred in game management during the last few years. The problems do not stop at state lines nor is it good business to limit information when others may benefit. It is gratifying to see the growth in interest and importance of this meeting on a region wide scope. This is borne out by the many organizations represented here. A quick look at the program indicates that all 12 member states are represented along with representatives from at least five other states. In addition to state game and fish personnel at least a dozen other agencies have representatives on the program. I am sure there are many organizations both private and public which are represented because of their interest in what is to be presented here during the next three days. Let me welcome them and encourage them to take part in the discussion. We believe an increasing part of the program in the future should be and will be the result of interest and work undertaken by private individuals and organizations.

There has been a tremendous change in the quantity and quality of the papers presented during the past 10 years. Ten years ago the bulk of the game management in the southeast consisted of restrictive measures. Now as you can see by the number of sessions, game and fish biology, education, law enforcement and even the administration are a part of game and fish management. As a result of a close association at meetings of this type many dollars have been saved in lessening duplicate research. In addition, greater emphasis has been placed on combining efforts for uniform studies on species conducive to this kind of study. These coordinated programs have produced a wealth of information at great savings. It is only by attending such meetings that new ideas can be thrashed around among all groups and result in sifting the chaff from the meat of the problems.

During the past 10 years the growth of this organization has been in direct relationship to the sound programs in the southeast. New faces appear each year and of course some old ones disappear. We welcome the new people and rejoice in the fact that most of our losses are due to advancement to a wider field of endeavor. Now, one word of advice for all of you technicians and especially the new ones. I am sure you will derive great benefits from attending these meetings. You were permitted by your administrators to attend because the state would benefit by your presence and your ability to cope with the problems presented here. I hope you attend every meeting possible, take part in the discussion and go back to your state a wiser and richer man. We want you to enjoy your stay, have fun but do not let it interfere with your primary reason for attending.

In closing I want to restate the tremendous change—all to the better—that has taken place during the last 10 years. This improvement is due to many factors but mainly because of the appreciation by everyone that to fulfill our obligations to the future generations we must put the welfare of the game and fish above political and selfish gains. This profession is comparatively young in this region and you must expect varying degrees of progress but when a good sound program has taken root and it is scuttled or severely set back for selfish gains it is not only treason to the sportsmen of your state but a severe blow to every man who has given his talents, all of his efforts and in a few