

You just might be one of those who will be the beneficiary. It is in the interest of conserving and preserving the most wonderful and beautiful thing in the world—human life.

It will help you fulfill the greatest responsibility you and I have—making the world a little bit better than we found it.

And now for just one parting shot—suppose since the beginning of man—and that was a long, long time ago—no one had ever done anything to make this world of ours a little better than he found it.

## **THE ADVANTAGES OF A REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT**

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Protection and regulation in the State of Maryland of our important natural resources, fish and wildlife, received little or no attention until the late 1700's. The initial law was ratified in 1785 by the General Assemblies of Maryland and Virginia and was known as "The Potomac River Compact" for the protection of fisheries, but upland game and wildlife continued without protection. It was not until 1842 that either of these two resources received recognition of their importance, and that year, the first law pertaining to wildfowl was enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland. Approximately twenty-two years later, in 1864, the first law protecting upland game was enacted, but it pertained to only one county in the state.

The ensuing years up to 1890 found almost every session of the General Assembly of the State enacting legislation applying to local county wildlife problems; however, in that year the first unification of these many local laws was placed on the statute books covering eight counties, which was a step forward in providing uniformity for open seasons in these counties. These laws were repealed from time to time and more adequate legislation enacted.

In 1896 the sportsmen throughout the State began to realize that some regulatory control was necessary for the protection of wildlife, for themselves and for its preservation for future generations. Through their endless efforts, on April 4, 1896, a law was passed empowering the Governor to appoint an officer to be known as the "State Game Warden." This officer in turn had the authority to appoint Deputy Game Wardens in the counties, without a salary, to assist him in enforcing the local game laws. This was a good beginning, but it took another fourteen years to make a major breakthrough in systematic statewide control. For it was not until 1910 that the first commission, to be known as the Maryland Conservation Commission, was formed and uniformity of the laws for the entire state was considered. That year, a uniform state-wide waterfowl law was enacted, to be followed in 1912 with the first state-wide upland game season law, which abolished many of the prior local regulations.

But the determined sportsmen, still not satisfied with the limited protection of our wildlife resources, were instrumental in 1918 in getting the first hunting license law passed. Shortly thereafter, a law was enacted which created the position of "Salaried Deputy Game Warden" with one to be assigned to each county. This was the beginning of state-wide enforcement of laws protecting game and fish.

The Maryland Conservation Commission continued its operation without major changes until 1939. At that time it was completely revised—all control of fisheries in tidewater was placed under a newly created

agency to be known as the "Commission of Tidewater Fisheries." All regulations covering game and inland fish were placed under another newly created agency to be known as the "Game and Inland Fish Commission." The creation of these two agencies as guardians over our wildlife was a very progressive step forward.

From this reorganization and with growth of population moving so rapidly, it was realized that better supervision and enforcement was a necessity in the field, so in 1948 the state was divided into six regions, with a Regional Game Warden appointed to supervise all law enforcement personnel in his respective region. By the end of 1950, there were at least two salaried game wardens assigned to each county.

During all of these years, the Commission's offices were located in a rented space in Baltimore. In 1958, it was relocated in the new State Office Building in Annapolis, the Capitol of the State. With the main office now more centrally located and realizing better communication and utilization of personnel and equipment was a necessity, in 1966 the original six regions were combined into four regions, with a regional headquarters established in each. These regional offices were supervised by a Regional Game Warden over Law Enforcement and a Regional Wildlife Manager over management activities. To better coordinate all communications and information between these regional offices and the main central office, it was determined that there should be one supervisor in charge of each of the regions. Creation of the position of Regional Manager was in 1967 and appointments were promptly made.

These Regional Headquarters have proven to be a very vital step forward in the efficiency of law enforcement. They are hubs around which both law enforcement and management programs of the area revolve, and with this close contact many difficult problems can be resolved by combined coordination.

They are geographically situated in the center of each region, which affords the public much better use of Department services and facilities. Too, it allows a closer liaison between the Department and the sportsmen; and since most wildlife problems are best met and solved on the local level, these offices provide this opportunity.

Up to this time, our Department had shared a radio frequency with another state agency, but with the construction of our new Regional Headquarters, the Department installed its own self-contained and controlled state-wide radio system. Each of these offices has a radio dispatcher that screens all telephone calls at this centralized communication center, and immediately expedites all complaints to the Wildlife Officers in the field nearest the violation of complaint.

In turn, the Wildlife Officer while in the field can get much needed information from the Regional Headquarters in a matter of minutes. This convenience is of particular value when checking hunting and fishing licenses, as the radio dispatcher can contact the central office, verify a license, and relay back to the Officer very rapidly, thus enabling him to refrain from detaining an apprehendee an unreasonable amount of time.

These headquarters have street directories of cities within and near their respective region, which are valuable law enforcement tools. Especially is this true in the Washington, Virginia, Maryland Metropolitan area, where residents of the District of Columbia or Virginia will give false information to obtain a Maryland resident license. Should the Wildlife Officer have any doubts about any such license, he can immediately radio Headquarters for a directory verification, which many times shows a different name at the given address. Confronted with this fact, the suspect generally will admit he has falsified the information. But should he not, this directory also lists telephone numbers, so that the Officer can have the dispatcher phone for verification of residents at the address in question. This has made the Wildlife Officer much more efficient in the field than was possible prior to this centralized communication system.

All delinquent warrants pertaining to violators located in another region are processed through these offices by being sent to the Regional Headquarters nearest the violators residence. The expediting of these delinquent warrants by officers in the pertinent area, saves many man hours and much travel time.

Copies of all records pertaining to the Region, such as violation reports and permits are maintained in the local office. They are readily accessible to all personnel and most convenient for any information required by the officer in the field through the dispatcher.

Each of these headquarters contains a small film library and a projector that are in constant demand by the officers for showing at schools, scout meeting, civic organizations and sportsmen clubs. A list of other available films from the main office that can be obtained upon request is maintained.

Hunter Safety Programs are channeled out of these headquarters. A list of all instructors within the region and an ample supply of all material required for conducting these courses are maintained here. With the material so readily available to the instructors, each year there seems to be an increase in classes and student demand for the course, even though Maryland is still on a voluntary basis.

Weekly supervisor meetings are held at these Headquarters. Such conferences give the Regional Manager, Regional Wildlife Officer and the Regional Wildlife Manager the opportunity to review any new department policies or procedures. They also discuss the work plans for the coming week and review future work programs to insure that they will be initiated as previously planned or to revise them as the case may be. These close working conditions enhance the ability of the supervisors to utilize their personnel to a greater advantage in enforcement or management programs as they develop.

The Regional Headquarters also serve as a location for monthly meetings of regional law enforcement personnel. Such meetings are important links in the orientation and coordination of the work of the enforcement division. The officers have the opportunity to discuss any problems and exchange or compare any unusual happenings they encounter. Many of these meetings are attended by the Chief of Law Enforcement for the reviewing of all new regulations or law changes and any revisions in Department policies are brought to the attention of the officers. Such monthly up-dating of all decisions and policies for the officers keeps them better informed, which in turn, will benefit their overall performance.

Biologists and extension personnel may also attend these meetings to review and discuss their management programs within the area. Again the close association of Law Enforcement and Management personnel involved, affords a greater coordination of the work load, as well as better utilization of all manpower and equipment.

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Officers located within the State have cars equipped with radios on the Maryland frequency. Much of the communication between the two agencies, is channeled through these regional offices. This greatly facilitates the consolidation of Federal and State activities and has proven to be of tremendous assistance in avoiding justified complaints from hunters and sportsmen of duplicate checking by two law enforcement agencies.

Each of these headquarters has emergency stand-by schedules and is equipped with auxiliary generators to insure radio communication at all times. Should an emergency occur, they will serve as control centers for personnel and equipment. In addition, all officers are supplied with Civil Defense equipment and should a Civil Defense Alert occur, again they will serve as control centers.

They are used as supply stations for each of the regions. Equipment, such as boats, motors, trucks, mowers, tires, oil and other equipment and supplies are stored at these offices. They also serve as maintenance quarters for minor repairs of automobiles and other equipment.

It is also a convenient center for the general public to get information pertaining to all phases of the Department and its management and enforcement operations.

Today we live in a fast-moving mechanical world, where the word "Progress" seems to be the overall goal of man. Yet, in so many instances to accomplish what is thought of as "Progress," many of our free, God given beauties are completely overlooked and forgotten. To prevent such destruction and to continue better conservation of our wildlife, we must have the best in Law Enforcement that can be obtained. As you and I know, the Wildlife Officer not only enforces laws, but in reality is the front man for every Department in its relations with the public. And with the public's demand for better information, which is a *true step toward better conservation*, these Regional Headquarters are proving to be assets in the overall Law Enforcement Program.

## PRIMA FACIE EVIDENCE

By PHILIP J. STRONG

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### PRIMA FACIE EVIDENCE

*Prima Facie* is a Latin phrase which means at first view, first appearance, or first sight. When you approach a hunter or fisherman you take in the whole situation at a glance. Most States have *prima facie* laws and by these we prosecute many Game and Fish law violators. *Prima facie* evidence, like presumption, is set up by rules of law because the burden of proving absolutely everything involved in a case is almost impossible. Our Legislature has established that certain facts are self-evident and places the violator on the defense because the burden of proof is placed on him instead of the law enforcement officer.

When making a *prima facie* case, you simply present the facts, which according to law, constitute a violation. After that, it is up to the accused to explain the facts. Conviction is not automatic, but as I stated before, the burden of proof is on the defendant rather than the prosecutor.

Section 5884, Mississippi Code of 1942, Volume 5, Recompiled, states "that any person found in the possession of a trap, fishing tackle, or other *device* of any description whatsoever used for the purpose of taking wild animals, wild birds, or fish in the natural habitat of such animals, birds, or fish, or in possession of dead bodies of wild birds, wild animals, or fish within the field, in the forests or on the public highway or on the waters of Mississippi, shall be *prima facie* evidence that said person is or has been hunting, trapping, or fishing." I am sure that all of you have a law similar to this law. It is under this statute that we convict many violators. *Prima facie* means that there is sufficient evidence to justify the facts that are stated. For example, when on routine patrol you had reason to stop a pickup truck coming out of a swamp or wooded area and while checking the truck you found a freshly-killed deer in the back. The occupants of the pickup had a 30.06 rifle and also a headlight lying on the seat or floor board of the truck. The dead body of the freshly-killed deer, the headlight, the 30.06 rifle and the time of night would be *prima facie* evidence that the occupants of the vehicle had killed the deer by the aid of a headlight. You probably have possession laws whereby you could prosecute these people, but the penalty for headlighting deer is much more severe than the penalty for possession.

Another example is when you are on patrol on a river and stop a boat to check the occupants for fishing licenses. In the course of the