

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS



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: This release is of interest :
: chiefly in Utah, Montana, Wyoming, :
: Idaho, Nevada, Arizona, New Mex- :
: ico, and Colorado. :
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INVESTIGATION OF CHARGES CLEARS
BEAR RIVER REFUGE SUPERINTENDENT

George E. Mushbach, superintendent of the Bear River (Utah) Migratory Bird Refuge, has been exonerated of charges made by a number of local sportsmen of Utah, the Bureau of Biological Survey announced to-day (February 21), after conducting a thorough investigation. Mr. Mushbach, the investigators found, has been conscientious, efficient, and industrious in the discharge of his duties.

The complaints against Mushbach included charges; (1) that his management of the water on the refuge was a principal cause of the outbreak of duck sickness there in the fall of 1932; (2) that he failed to cooperate with local sportsmen and with the State Fish and Game Department; and (3) that on units of the refuge designated as public shooting-grounds he deliberately raised and lowered water levels in order to spoil the shooting.

The bureau's investigation included examination of testimony by the Migratory Wildfowl Committee of the Utah State Sportsmen's Association presented at a meeting December 15 at the State Capitol Building in Salt Lake City. De-

tailed study also was made of the records and correspondence having to do with Mushbach's administration of the refuge, and consideration was given to the testimony of many other persons who had expressed their interest and desire to be heard. As a result of the investigation, the Biological Survey has found that the charges are not supported by the facts available for examination.

Commenting on the resolution introduced in the State Senate of Utah, on February 16, requesting that Congress conduct an investigation of Mushbach's administration of the Bear River Refuge, Paul G. Redington, Chief of the Biological Survey, expressed the opinion that such an investigation would probably result in conclusions similar to those already reached by the Bureau. He added, however:

"In view of the fact that the situation has excited so much controversy among sportsmen and others interested in the management of the refuge, the Biological Survey would welcome a review of all the facts by a Congressional committee, if Congress should find the investigation warranted. Should the resolution now before the Utah Senate reach the National Congress and receive favorable action, it would then be possible to have witnesses summoned and records produced. Then all the facts relating to the past and present administration of the refuge and the extent and nature of the efforts made by State and Federal officials to reduce the 1932 outbreak of duck sickness on the Bear River marshes could be placed before the committee. The decision, we are confident, would definitely confirm the conclusions of the bureau and settle an issue that has caused much dissention."