



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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CHIEF OF FEDERAL GAME WARDENS TO RETIRE ON NOVEMBER 1

W. E. Crouch, Chief, Division of Game Management, will retire on November 1 upon the completion of 31 years of Federal service, Albert M. Day, Director, Fish and Wildlife Service announced today.

The chief of the country's Federal game wardens is turning in his badge because of poor health, according to Mr. Day.

"The Service can ill afford to lose a man as alert and energetic as 'W.E.' has always been," commented the Director. "He has always been in the front rank as a worker and as an executive."

Mr. Crouch started his Government career on November 1, 1916, as a field assistant with the former Bureau of Biological Survey. His first work was in Montana and Idaho eradicating ground squirrels and prairie dogs, under the direction of Dr. A. K. Fisher, now retired. During the summers of 1915 and 1916 he had served as foreman of a prairie dog control party on the Custer National Forest in Montana.

On June 11, 1917, Mr. Crouch received a permanent appointment as biological assistant and represented the Biological Survey in a cooperative project with the Idaho Extension Service in the work of organizing campaigns for the control of rodents, particularly ground squirrels and jack rabbits, in agricultural regions. As a graduate of the North Dakota Agricultural College in June 1916 with a B.S. degree, Mr. Crouch was well trained along general lines of agriculture and the specific work to which the Bureau was assigning him.

In 1919 he was particularly commended by the Biological Survey and the State of Idaho for the results obtained from an extremely effective campaign which he carried on against rodents in Idaho.

On July 1, 1924, he was promoted to the position of assistant biologist and on June 7, 1928, he was transferred from leader of rodent control in Boise, Idaho, to the headquarters office in Washington, D. C., to assist the head of the Economics Investigations Division. On July 2, 1929, he was promoted to senior biologist.

On July 1, 1934, when the Division of Predatory Animal and Rodent Control (of which Mr. Crouch had been assistant chief) and the Division of Game and Bird Conservation were consolidated, he assumed active charge of the Section of Game Agents and Refuges, and in addition was made assistant chief of the Division of Game Management. He had the responsibility of supervising the Bureau's big-game refuges and directing the activities of the game management agents and deputy agents employed for the enforcement of the various Federal laws governing the protection of migratory waterfowl. At that time Mr. Crouch organized and supervised the Bureau's new system of game law enforcement by means of the "flying squadron", or mobile crews of enforcement officers who moved quickly from one trouble spot to another and became very successful in the apprehension of game law violators.

On July 16, 1938, Mr. Crouch was appointed as Chief of the Division of Game Management, which position he leaves at the time of his retirement. As an ex officio duty of this position, Mr. Crouch acts as chairman of a Service group that meets each year in June to analyze the reports on waterfowl populations and make recommendations for the coming season's hunting regulations. It is the recommendations of his committee that largely determine just how much, or how little, duck shooting some two million hunters will have each fall.

Mr. Crouch was born in Napoleon, N. Dak., on November 25, 1891, the son of E. J. Crouch, a farmer, and Cora B. Lampman Crouch. On May 12, 1918, he was married to Lulu May Fowler of Pocatello, Idaho. His son, Robert F., spent many months in Army hospital recovering from severe battle wounds received in the South Pacific. His daughter, Betty Marie, is married and lives in Virginia.

After November 1, "W. E." and his wife will head for his old stamping ground in Boise, Idaho, where he plans to start enjoying his well-earned retirement by catching up on his scatter gunning and trout fishing. Between times he'll be poking around in wild places for Indian arrowheads and opals, of which he has outstanding collections. He is also an enthusiastic coin collector.

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(A photograph of Mr. Crouch can be obtained at Room 7211, New Interior Bldg.)