



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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DIRECTOR OF THE FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE SPEAKS ON
WILDLIFE WEEK AND THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY

"The observance of National Wildlife Restoration Week this year from March 18 to 24 finds us in another period of national emergency when the expansion of military activities is arousing fears in the minds of conservation leaders and organizations for the safety and welfare of the Nation's wildlife resources," Albert M. Day, Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, declared today.

The Fish and Wildlife Service is particularly concerned because military activities affect fish and wildlife resources in many ways, according to Director Day, who explained that during World War II controversies frequently arose over the selection of training areas and bombing ranges in the heart of highly productive commercial fishing areas or on wildlife refuge lands of the Service. "Many of these conflicts were resolved through negotiation with military agencies by relocation without loss of military efficiency but with gains for food production or wildlife protection.

"I believe it will allay some of the anxiety being expressed today by conservationists and wildlife administrators if they know that last August Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman called the attention of the Secretary of Defense to these threatened dangers and proposed an orderly means of adjusting the problems that might arise between the two departments. The Secretary of Defense promptly designated a representative of the Department of the Army, the Department of the Navy, and the Department of the Air Force to serve in a liaison capacity with representatives of the Department of the Interior 'to minimize the impact on local wildlife resources and other resources which may be threatened by necessary military activities in areas under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior.'

"We can report that the military agencies are cooperating with the liaison officers of the Department of the Interior in an excellent manner to harmonize the interests in such areas where army camps and training stations, aerial gunnery ranges or naval test installations are again being opened or reactivated on an extensive scale. For example, through discussions with the Atomic Energy Commission a bombing site was selected, well in advance of field operations, for conducting the recent atomic bomb tests near Las Vegas, Nevada, without danger of injury to the Nelson's bighorn sheep concentrated on the nearby Desert Game Range established in 1936 for their protection and administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

"Negotiations with the Navy for the removal of an aerial bombing target from the heart of one of the Service's important waterfowl refuges on the Atlantic Coast are now in progress. The Air Force has made arrangements to route all proposals

made by its Real Estate Section for developing new areas for its activities through the liaison Officer for reference to the Department of the Interior for review and comment before final decision.

"In addition to this action being taken by the Federal Government to protect our renewable resources, the conservationists of the country, as individuals and as groups, must not slacken the vigilance and aggressiveness of their conservation efforts. Wildlife is not a store to be exploited in any one national emergency. Instead, we should think of it as the tangible basis of a spiritual resource that must be conserved to help carry our country through many difficult and trying times."

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