



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release JULY 24, 1957

DEER DIE-OFFS BRING ABOUT NEW TYPE OF INTERSTATE COOPERATION

A new type of interstate cooperation on wildlife problems, augmented by Federal aid funds, is being undertaken by 10 Southeastern States through an agreement to jointly finance a study of a serious increase during recent years in the mortality rate of white-tailed deer, Department of the Interior sources said today.

Participating in the study are Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, South Carolina, Virginia and Maryland.

The cooperative effort is a Federal aid project financed in part by funds supplied by the Pittman-Robertson Act for the Restoration of Wildlife, according to officials of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, a component agency of the Department's Fish and Wildlife Service.

This Act provides for an 11 percent tax on sporting arms and ammunition, the proceeds from the tax to be apportioned to State fish and game departments by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife on a matching basis for approved projects--\$1 in State funds and \$3 in Federal aid funds.

The fish and game department of each of the 10 States is contributing \$2,000 to a common fund to finance the deer die-off study. Each of the States will be reimbursed in the amount of \$1,500 from the Federal aid money, the remaining \$500 to be the State's portion of the matching formula.

A contract has been awarded to the University of Georgia to make the study. The university will provide the scientific and laboratory services necessary for the project. Work will be done in the field at the scene of the outbreaks as they occur, and in the laboratory and on test herds. The study will cover deer diseases and nutrition problems, with attention also on toxicity in plants as a possible cause of the heavy mortality of the deer.

The die-offs are so widespread and so serious that the interested States agree that more can be accomplished through their combined efforts than by attacking the matter on a State-by-State basis.

There have been numerous examples of interstate cooperation in the past but the pattern has been for the States to work independently toward an agreed goal. Waterfowl surveys, cooperative dove studies, cooperative antelope studies, and coordinated fishery studies on the Upper Mississippi River are examples of the usual methods of interstate cooperation. In each instance the individual State did its part of the work toward the accepted objective. Another type of cooperation is typified by the work done by California where specialized laboratory service on food habits analyses is available to other State game departments on a contract basis.

x x x