



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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ALASKA GAME COMMISSION, CREATED IN DOGSLED DAYS, ENDS WORK DECEMBER 31

The Alaska Game Commission, which has helped to guide the management of Alaska's wildlife and sport fishery resources from the days of the dogsled to the era of the jet airplane, goes out of existence at midnight December 31, 1959.

Letters apprising present members of the termination of their responsibility have been sent by Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton. The reason for the termination is that under the terms of legislation granting Statehood to Alaska the State will assume, effective January 1, 1960, administration, management and conservation of the fish and wildlife resources handled by the Federal Government under the Alaska Game Law.

The Alaska Game Commission was created in 1925. It is composed of five members; one representing each of the four Judicial Divisions in Alaska, appointed by the Secretary of the Interior; the fifth member and Executive Officer of the Commission is the ranking official of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife in Alaska.

For some time the Commission had certain operational responsibilities but in later years it has served as a regulatory body and as an advisory group for the Secretary of the Interior on matters in which the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department has jurisdiction.

Last March the Department of the Interior granted a Unit Citation to the Commission for its efforts in a land where "the vast distances, limited transportation, and communication facilities make such a program most difficult."

The citation pays tribute to the way the Commission "met the serious threat to the wildlife resources of Alaska which resulted from the early day market hunters, and the enormous increase in population coincident with the defense

activities of World War II and the post war oil exploration." The citation continues: "While members often found it necessary to restrict the public use of wildlife, their judgment and recommendations have been accurate and fair. This wisdom is attested by the present extremely healthy condition of the wildlife and sport fishery resources in Alaska and the sound public support given to the Commission."

The members of the Commission are: Forbes L. Baker, Fairbanks, Chairman; Ralph Hall, Petersburg; Andrew Simons, Lakeview; Harry O. Brown, Kobuk. The fifth member, Urban C. Nelson, is Regional Director in Alaska for the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. Termination of his responsibilities as Executive Officer of the Commission will not affect his duties as Regional Director.

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