

Under a 1935 law, 25 percent of the net receipts from wildlife refuge lands (timber, minerals, oil, grass, and so forth) is paid each year to the counties where the refuges are located. The money benefits public schools and roads.

The 1935 formula has resulted in inequitable distribution of receipts, Mr. Carver said, because some refuge lands have little or no revenue-producing activities and other counties receive a great deal more revenue than if the lands were in private ownership. The new formula would remedy the situation by putting all revenues into a single fund and distributing them under a formula tied to local real estate values.

Assistant Secretary Carver said that in fiscal year 1961 net receipts from 120 National Wildlife Refuges, game ranges, and waterfowl production areas were about \$2 million. Of this, \$496,840 was returned to the 188 counties where these areas are located. The largest payment to any county was some \$277,000 and the smallest, \$1.

Under the new formula, 203 counties would have received about \$620,000, nearly \$123,000 more than the actual payment in 1961. A similar calculation for 1962 showed that 218 counties and the State of Alaska would have received about \$658,000, or \$75,000 more than was actually paid in 1962. This would have included 33 more counties than the 185 receiving payments last year.

"Every county, wherein lands have been acquired as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System, would share more equitably under our proposal in the total net receipts from the System whether the refuge lands are revenue-producing or not," Assistant Secretary Carver added.

The new formula would continue to require use of the fund for the benefit of public schools and roads.

Assistant Secretary Carver said several provisions in pending bills do not relate to the revenue-sharing principle. Accordingly, the Department urges that such sections be excluded.

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