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SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE, FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE,  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, WASHINGTON, D. C., BEFORE THE  
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Animal Control -- One Year Later

Let me start this speech positively -

The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife will fulfill its responsibilities for predatory animal control in Colorado and the rest of the Nation.

The Bureau is obligated to do this. In our government of laws rather than of men an agency must do what it is authorized and directed to do by law. The Act of March 2, 1931, directs us to carry out campaigns for the control of predatory animals.

But let me make this clear, also.

There has been a change in the methods under which we will carry out this Congressional mandate. We submit that this change is in the interests of your Association and similar associations throughout the West.

Basically the change is that we have undeclared the "general war" on coyotes and other predators. But we're going to hit them hard where they are or may be on a sheep and calf killing rampage.

As you probably know, we have an increase of \$200,000 for predatory animal control appropriated by the Congress for the fiscal year that began four weeks ago -- on July 1, 1966. I'm going to tell you how we propose to use that money.

One of the most fundamental changes in our approach to animal control is that our new goal is, in general, multiple use, and animal control is simply one of several resource management tools for that total public. We shall be placing increasing reliance on the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, and other land managers, for determining where and when animal control should be conducted. Let me be clear again on this point: this is no abdication of our responsibility. Rather, it is a recognition of the responsibility of those agencies for identifying how land will be used, and the management tools that are necessary to accomplish planned objectives. This is in full recognition of the multiple-use concept, now required by statute, on lands administered by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. When animal control is necessary, the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife will determine the methods to be used.

All of this ties in to the work plans that are now being prepared for our predatory animal operations in each State. These State plans will be consolidated for each region and finally for the National program. These plans are being developed cooperatively with the land managing agencies, users, and other cooperators. They will clearly identify the work to be done in each location, why it should be done, and the

methods that will be used. The monthly and annual reports will then account for progress on each of the objectives set forth in the work plans.

Now, how do we propose to spend the \$200,000 to strengthen the overall program, especially here in the West? Some people assume we shall take the very simple expedient of hiring \$200,000 worth of trappers. This is not what we propose. Instead, we plan a series of expenditures that will update and strengthen the program now and for the future.

The general policy governing the application of most of the new funds will be to improve manpower utilization, to meet immediate and critical situations, and to build for the future.

We would fall behind the times if we did not devise new methods for improving our operations and for focusing our talents and attention when and where needed. In this space age, when a soft landing has been made on the moon, we would surely be backward if we could not conceive of new approaches. I think you would not want us to admit that we can't find new and better ways of doing a job that had its beginnings with prehistoric man. This would certainly be an indictment, both of our know-how, and of our Bureau, for failing to keep pace. This is one of the reasons that we have initiated an aggressive training program. In the final analysis, our strength depends upon the capabilities and the use, or deployment of our personnel. Dollars and cents, and for that matter, even a greatly expanded field force are not nearly as important as a highly skilled core of professionally trained men --

highly flexible, and willing to test and use every available animal control method.

Now then, here is how we are going to use the \$200,000 increase to improve our effectiveness.

(1) We are establishing flying squads, or mobile forces -- teams of highly skilled field men, ready to move into critical situations.

This approach was first used here in Colorado in this very Craig-Meeker area during the last lambing season. The results were most gratifying. Several of our expert field men from other areas were thrown into this trouble spot and rapidly brought it under control.

We are making travel funds available to use the flying-squad technique in all of the western or operational States. The best men we have in several specialized fields -- lion control, coyote control, bird and rodent control, reforestation -- will be on call to assist with critical situations on a State or regional basis. In our view, this is one important way of achieving a degree of flexibility and, through improved manpower utilization, to bring the right skill to the right place at the right time and with the right force.

(2) Substantial increases are being made in funds available for aerial hunting. Aerial hunters -- a pilot and gunner using a small plane -- are able to spot and identify the individual and offending coyotes in the early morning hours as they move out and away from sheep, on which they may have dined during the night. Flying low, an experienced gunner

can be very effective in applying a rather selective technique. Planes are also valuable in locating dens. The use of planes can be applied to a larger portion of the West than has been the case in previous years. This technique will be used wherever it is safe and practical.

(3) We are going to recruit at least one additional field assistant for each of the western States. These men are to be technically trained with a college degree, and will be assigned to older, more experienced personnel for a thorough grounding in the field aspects of animal control. This will serve two purposes: (a) it will add to the field force, and (b) it will begin to prepare men for advancement into supervisory positions. In other words, we shall be solving the immediate need to beef up the field work while developing a reserve of formally educated field men to add strength to the activity for the years ahead. I think you will be interested to know that we consider this a crash program, and we are making personal contacts with many universities, asking them to encourage their more promising students to step into the Division of Wildlife Services.

We are also making provision for the additional employment of a few field assistants -- or trappers -- to cover areas not adequately covered by existing personnel.

(4) Field assistants, formerly known as trappers, will receive more training. We think that most of our field assistants are good field men. We would have to admit, however, that they vary in experience, ability, and training. The long and hard way is to let them spend

years on a trapline and, through trial and error, to learn the ways of the several animals with which they are concerned. A more effective way to train these men to do a better job in a shorter span of time is to maintain a continuous training program; with training conducted by the men with the most skill, so that all field personnel will be currently informed of the latest techniques, and receive the continuing benefits of the experience of trained men.

(5) We are setting up funds to upgrade equipment; not only the automotive equipment, but the actual control equipment, to increase our efficiency.

(5) We shall develop educational material on the reasons for animal control and how it is undertaken. We are currently planning a film that will cover this subject in broad terms. Other educational material will also be developed.

We are confident that these steps will improve the program in each State and over the West generally. We believe these expenditures will yield the greatest return for the dollar spent.

Now, let me share a few random thoughts with you.

As you know, and as we are keenly aware, there is great, critical public interest in how we conduct and supervise the animal control program. Like any other program, it must have public acceptance or it will not long survive. We must be able to answer to several publics and to a very watchful Congress. In other words, the way we conduct our

program in the West must be acceptable to the great mass of people living in the East. We must, therefore, conduct our animal control programs as selectively and as humanely as possible, fully cognizant of the very real needs of the user groups, but also sensitive to, and understanding of the social and esthetic values of predatory animals. To do this, as we must, we need your understanding and support.

I would like to be very frank in discussing our relations with you and with other user groups. This is a point that our Director, John S. Gottschalk, stressed when addressing your National convention in Portland. We must have more flexibility if we are to use our manpower effectively. Too often, by the nature of our agreements with cooperators, employees that are supervised by us are tied to a specific area. They should certainly be in a position to lend assistance when a critical situation may be no farther away than in the next county. The mandate to us from Congress and from the Secretary's Office is very clear. If we are to stand responsible for the program and its results, we must have full authority over its conduct. We must improve our administration of the program. We must improve budgetary control and reporting procedures. We intend to do this.

Another point -- "do-it-yourself" control using highly poisonous materials on larger carnivores has increased here in Colorado and elsewhere. This practice is very hazardous. It is not as effective as professional control with problem animals, and it is dangerous to non-target animals, engendering a public reaction against all forms of control. It is self-defeating, and we urge that it be stopped.

While your primary interest is in the animal control functions of our total program, you have an indirect interest in two newer responsibilities of our Division of Wildlife Services: the wildlife enhancement and pesticides surveillance. We intend to pursue these with equal vigor, within financial and manpower limitations. These programs are designed (1) to improve conditions for all forms of wildlife especially on Indian lands and military lands, and (2) to conduct surveillance operations of pesticide applications on Federal lands especially Interior lands. We intend to see that these applications are models of improved and cautious use of agricultural chemicals to achieve resource management goals without adverse impact upon the environment.

Now about the future. With some of the fundamental steps now accomplished, there will be a continuing and planned program of improved training and supervision and the application of new techniques as these are developed. We invite your continued scrutiny. We are convinced that we can meet the challenge -- we will hold livestock losses to a minimum and do it in a manner that will be acceptable to you, to the American public generally, and to the Congress of the United States.