

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

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REMARKS BY DR. LESLIE L. GLASGOW, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE AND PARKS, AT THE OPENING SESSION, ANNUAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GAME, FISH AND CONSERVATION COMMISSIONERS, NEW YORK CITY, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1970

Although the American Fisheries Society has concluded its one hundredth annual meeting, I want to join those expressing birthday wishes to its members who are remaining over for the International's sessions. The Society is a spry centenarian and I salute its proud record of scientific activity.

I want to compliment you for your effective campaign in making the States' fish and wildlife interests known to Congress. You have traveled a long road and done a fine job in bringing your influence to bear in the cause of conserving our natural resources.

I hope that you share my gratification over the new Interior Department regulations to promote stronger partnerships between the States and our agencies. The regulation was worked up in cooperation with your association and it expresses, I believe, a new mood of cooperative willingness. It sets into action the policy of President Nixon that "partnership is a two-way street, and if the partnership is to thrive, that street has to be traveled -- both ways." Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel described it as a recognition of the need for Interior

land-managing agencies -- which administer 540 million acres -- to encourage and assist the States to plan comprehensively for enhancing their fish and wildlife resources.

And he stressed that such comprehensive plans need to take into account the rapidly growing recreational demand by all segments of the public -- not merely hunters and fishermen.

Promulgation of any cooperative regulation is only a first step. The success must be measured on how well each party responds to the obligations required in a cooperative effort. Again, expressing President Nixon's position, this must be a two-way street.

I will get back to the matter of diverse demands shortly. But first some other cheerful items.

The waterfowl picture for 1970 is bright and water conditions look favorable as of now for the 1971 breeding season.

We anticipate a fall flight of ducks comparable to those we cheered about in the Fifties. It is particularly pleasing that flights of mallards will likely be close to the peak of those years. The liberalized regulations ought to provide a great deal of high quality hunting recreation this season.

You will be able to check my fall-flight forecast in a few short weeks. Here is another prediction but we expect it to take a bit longer.

From all the signs we now have, we believe it will be only a matter of a few years before there is a final solution to the problem of lead poisoning of waterfowl.

The enthusiastic response from the sporting arms industry has been generous. The industry's trade organization, as most of you know, has helped to fund several years of study seeking non-toxic substitutes for lead shot.

The studies have shown that alteration of lead has been unacceptable -- whether through plating or coating shot; using lead-iron-plastic composites, or using biochemical additives that might make the lead harmless in waterfowl systems.

Iron shot seemed to be the only solution, but unaltered iron shot removed the choke and scored barrels. However, the studies produced a possible solution in super-soft iron in wire form. There is still the need to move into mass production of a substitute which is economically feasible.

You can understand that individual segments of the arms industry are no more eager than Macy's or Gimbels to reveal their secrets. But we do know that several companies are devoting a lot of attention to developing operational procedures. We feel our prediction of a solution within a few years will come true.

Lead from shotgun pellets is only one factor in the continuing poisoning of fish and wildlife. Residues of pesticides in the bodies of birds and mammals are now commonplace, and the effects are serious, as you know. Residues of contaminants are detected by our monitoring studies, and effects are determined by long-range research programs. Residues of lead, mercury, cadmium, chromium and titanium are well documented in vertebrates, with effects now becoming apparent. We have now identified several aroclor formulations in our analysis of P. C. B. residues in fish tissue. Their effects are not yet known but we plan to expand our monitoring efforts.

Delegates from the Rocky Mountain States know how woolgrowers a few years ago thought it might be a good idea to kill off most, or all golden eagles because of their alleged predations on young lambs. At a recent meeting of the Woolgrowers Association, the ranchers demonstrated changed attitudes. Far from urging greater kills of eagles, the woolgrowers are calling for more precise management techniques, including selective removal of offending birds, from specific places and at critical times.

The turnabout in opinion is a result of a study of the golden eagles. Costs were underwritten by the Woolgrowers Association, the National Audubon Society and our Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. It is a fine example of how Government, industry and private conservation forces can cooperate in a common cause.

Last month President Nixon sent to Capitol Hill the first report to the Congress on the state of the Nation's environment. It was an historic milestone, the first time any Nation paused, deliberately, for a comprehensive assessment of the quality of the surroundings.

"Our environmental problems are very serious, indeed urgent," the President said, "but they do not justify either panic or hysteria. The problems are highly complex, and their resolution will require rational, systematic approaches, hard work and patience. There must be a national commitment and a rational commitment."

Oil spill incidents have perhaps done as much as anything to awaken the public to the dangers of pollution. It is an area very much in need of systematic rationality to avert future disasters.

The Santa Barbara blowout off California and the Chevron platform fire in the Gulf exposed the fact that the Government needed to improve its role as a regulator.

Secretary Hickel has had those outdated and inadequate regulations overhauled and modernized. Stringent rules have been set to minimize the number of incidents and to compel a prompt cleanup.

With proper safeguards, and adequate investigations before production is permitted, we can proceed with development of the oil and gas resources of the Outer Continental Shelf and still protect all the other resources.

The Department has requested funds and manpower to step up the surveillance of OCS oil and gas operations. The proper overview requires more than men; it also needs modern transportation, helicopters and boats, to give the men the mobility vital for quick and frequent inspection of offshore installations.

Our need for more data on the Outer Continental Shelf goes beyond what the oil, gas and mineral resources are; we need to know also the extent and location of vital spawning and rearing areas for aquatic organisms. What are the seasons of use and their routes of migration? What are our sea bird resources off our coastlines and what vital part do they play in the complex communities of marine life? How many of our wildlife and fisheries resources are we now losing to oil pollution? These and many other questions need answers. We can get some of them by a thorough inventory of all resources on the OCS. Then, management plans can be developed for individual OCS sectors in order to insure a minimum of conflicts as resources are developed.

The great oil strike on Alaska's North Slope electrified the petroleum industry. It also jolted the conservationists of the country.

The 48-inch pipeline needed to move the oil hundreds of miles south over mountains, down river basins, through huge stretches of permafrost, past the State's population heartland to a Gulf of Alaska seaport, is the Free World's biggest engineering proposal.

The several agencies of the Department of the Interior, including the Fish and Wildlife Service, have developed, in cooperation with a Federal Task Force on Alaskan Oil Development and several agencies of the State of Alaska, a set of stipulations which must be met before an oil transport pipeline can be built across Alaska. These stipulations are the stiffest ever written for such a construction task. They require both engineering construction and operation in such manner as to minimize any adverse effect on the environment. Engineering designs must reflect the criteria dictated by permafrost, earthquake, flood, land slides, and other hazards resulting from the rugged terrain and severe climatic conditions. Contingency plans are required for those accidents which might occur, so as to minimize any damage and to speed the clean up of any spill. There must be assurances from the oil companies that these stipulations will be met before any permit is granted for construction of a pipeline across Alaska.

Any large-scale development of the vast oil shale deposits in Colorado, Utah and Wyoming will have to undergo the same sort of searching scrutiny before production can be permitted. Oil shale is a voluminous energy resource but commercial use of it would have tremendous environmental impacts.

The Public Land Law Review Commission, after five years of work, this summer completed the job Congress assigned to it and submitted its report. The Commission suggested Federal assistance for determining environmental effects of oil shale operations.

The Land Law Review Commission report is worth your reading. From red-hot reviews in publications authored by members of this International, I know some of you have already read it, with intense interest. And, of course, some of the membership made important contributions to the Commission's work over the years. I believe your States will be commenting on various Commission recommendations for some months to come.

I know that tomorrow you are to receive a report from your Committee on Rare and Endangered Species, so I won't go into extensive detail on that matter. With your indulgence, I'll make a few comments, however.

We are going to protect endangered species whether game or non-game with even more vigor than we pursue increased hunting opportunity. We need and solicit your assistance. Cooperation is essential.

The whooping crane is a cooperative program which appears to be successful. Egg napping in cooperation with the Canadian Wildlife Service resulted in the removal of one egg from each of several nests in 1967, 1968, and 1969. These eggs were taken to Patuxent, hatched and reared using carefully tested procedures. As a result, 14 whooping cranes are gradually approaching their brood age of 4 to 6 years. At the same time, the wild migrant population has grown at an unprecedented rate from a total of 43 observed in 1966, a year before the beginning of this program, to 56 at the time of their departure from Aransas Refuge last spring. A record of 14 nests were reported found this summer on the breeding grounds so there should be a further increase in whooper arrivals in Texas this fall.

Masked bobwhites were reintroduced in Arizona last spring from birds produced at Patuxent, another cooperative program which we hope and expect will be successful.

Our greatest challenge and cooperative venture will be implementing Public Law 91-135, a portion of which was designed as the Endangered Species Conservation Act of 1969, and which amended the Lacey Act. This is our second major effort to assist other nations world-wide to conserve their wildlife. As you know, it calls upon the Department of the Interior to develop a list of species and subspecies in danger of world-wide extinction and to prevent their entry into the United States except for scientific purposes. In developing this list we sought information from the wildlife managing agencies in over 55 countries, international organizations and recognized specialists. The initial list was published on June 2 and will be followed very shortly with another list reflecting information on animals received since that date. Some species of whales will probably be on the new list. Perhaps even more significant from an overall conservation standpoint is our effort to close the market to wildlife or wildlife products poached in other countries.

Federal statutes (The Lacey Act) have long prohibited the importation of birds and mammals taken or exported contrary to foreign law. The new law extended this protection to reptiles and amphibians. We are hopeful other countries will adopt similar regulations which would aid us in our efforts to conserve the alligator. We now have the legal means to control the interstate movement of illegally taken alligators but we would welcome the assistance of European and Far Eastern countries in drying up the markets in those areas. Enforcement efforts are being stepped up to control the illegal movement of wildlife.

We have all the authority needed to curtail poaching of animals such as the alligator by stopping the illegal shipment of hides. We think sweeping local laws engendered by emotionalism and pushed partly by those who seek personal gain can destroy the orderly market for animals which are not endangered or which again become abundant through management as has the fur seal and the sea otter. We expect the alligator to reach harvestable populations in two or three years. Such laws may well serve to protect remanent populations on a few parks but can work against the maintenance of large wild populations both here and abroad. Management by emotion has no place in conservation.

I'll get back to rare and endangered species shortly, when I start finding fault with the States.

Another of the Committee reports scheduled for tomorrow is on Land Resources. But I want to mention our own land acquisition briefly, since we think it is one of the highest priorities.

Destruction of wildlife habitat in the near future may reach calamity proportions. Currently we have two primary land acquisition programs. Under the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund (duck stamp receipts), we have acquired 1.3 million acres toward a 2.5-million-acre accelerated acquisition program goal for waterfowl habitat. Under the Land and Water Conservation Fund, we have initiated a program of acquiring refuges to preserve endangered species and to acquire small recreational areas adjacent to existing refuges and hatcheries. More than 18,000 acres have been acquired under this program.

These programs meet only a small portion of the total needs. The Department is developing legislative proposals looking toward a broader scope of habitat preservation. These programs would include estuary, wetland, and ecologically unique areas and areas for wildlife-oriented recreation.

We are also considering means of expanding the Federal Aid programs so that the States may participate to an even greater degree in meeting habitat preservation needs. In addition to broadened legislative authorization, we are also looking for additional means of funding expanded land acquisition.

The wide use of wildlife lands by the non-hunter would appear to warrant support of our acquisition programs with general funds. We believe the duck stamp price should be increased to \$5.00--as an initial step. If this legislation on the duck stamp increase is passed as we propose, then \$1.00 of the increase will be returned to the States on a pro rata basis for use in land acquisition.

The "recreation" bandwagon a few years back threatened to roll right over veteran conservationists who had spent their careers in resource-oriented work. Some of us recall the period with dismay. "Recreation" was the catchphrase that excused all sorts of misuse in the name of giving people room to play.

I think the movement has cooled off now to the point where we can take a calm look at the situation. We have been trying to do so in critically re-evaluating the National Wildlife Refuge System. As a result, an innovative effort has been started to make refuges places where people and wildlife meet.

No longer will these lands be classed as inviolate sanctuaries where no one dare set foot but the scientist. Neither will they become instant playgrounds where any forms of so-called recreation is allowable. All are welcome, but participatory activities on refuges will be those which are compatible with the primary purposes for which any particular refuge was established.

Perpetuation of our wildlife resource is still foremost in the management of these lands, but this is for the benefit of people.

It was people who made refuges possible, and it is now people who will rightfully benefit by the wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities being made available on all refuges.

People will be able to see birds and mammals without peering through the bars of a zoo. People will be able to see environmental quality expressed in the management of a refuge rather than reading about it, or seeing pretty pictures in a magazine. And people will be able to

breathe fresh air and hear sounds other than the screams of an ambulance, or their neighbor's "hi-fi." It will be people who can enjoy as well as hopefully understand the processes of a minute ecosystem as well as the fact that they are a part of the web of life.

Since I moved to Washington I have been on the revival circuit, sermonizing around the country on our need to combat the growing anti-hunting sentiment.

At the Interior Department, we get mail every day condemning hunting in any form. The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife advises me that on some days the trickle of mail builds up to a flood. I understand many of your State Fish and Game offices are undergoing the same sort of thing.

A lot of it, I suggest, is our own fault. At the Federal level there is the rare and endangered species program. It is evident beyond doubt that it has great appeal for the new converts to the ecology banner.

The newest recruit to the Woodman-Spare-That-Tree cause might suspect our motives in propagating more Bambis, because Bambi can be hunted, marinated and barbecued.

It is a very different proposition with the campaign to conserve the California condor. Not even a Fish and Game official would want to eat that. There is no sport at all in going after the teeny pupfish in California and Nevada, so an ultra-preservationist cannot help but concede our motives are pure in attempting to preserve the truly endangered critter.

Not so with the States. As a general rule, a State fish and wildlife manager's efforts are bent on protecting, increasing and then harvesting the game species -- on land, in the air, in the water. That's the way it was when I was there, and things haven't changed very much in the past year and a half.

In their own hard-headed best interests, States ought to begin setting up their own rare and endangered programs. Those which have started will please indulge me when I charge that most States have instead left it up to Uncle Sam.

The emphasis in the States has been on the bird, animal or fish which the license buyer can kill and take home. And you have most hunters and fishermen in your corner. But you are losing the great majority who neither hunt nor fish. They are anything but a silent majority. You had better do more to enlist them.

It seems obvious public interest in the non-hunting species has out-paced the rate of growth in hunting interest. The varmints have found a place in the affections of a lot of people.

More and more people are feeling outraged when they hear about a State still paying bounties. State game officials would be prudent to take a new look at their predator control programs, to make doubly sure they are aimed at carefully selected targets and not at a whole range of animals as in Grandpa's time.

States ought to clamp down hard on taking species from aircraft. Any time it is sanctioned, it ought to be severely limited, and the permit applicant ought to be made to prove his need for a permit beyond any reasonable doubt.

The days ahead, just as the days past, will continue to produce new challenges to us as managers of a living resource. With the new era of public involvement in ecology and environment, the State and Federal managers must face up to the cooperative thrust required to broaden our program scope and improve our salesmanship. In my opinion, our obligations to the people and to the resource will best be accomplished by the two-way street partnership.

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