



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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SECRETARY WATT ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF DR. ROBERT PUTZ
AS FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE REGIONAL DIRECTOR IN ALASKA

Secretary of the Interior James G. Watt today announced the appointment of Dr. Robert E. Putz as regional director in Alaska for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Putz, 48, will succeed Keith M. Schreiner, who is retiring in December after 27 years with the Fish and Wildlife Service, the last 4½ years as regional director in Alaska.

In announcing Putz's appointment during a visit to Alaska, Secretary Watt called him "an outstanding wildlife resource manager with a proven track record of accomplishment. Like Keith Schreiner, Bob Putz is one of the ablest career officials in the Service. He will carry on the tradition set by Schreiner of being a keen listener and a top-notch administrator who is willing to make the tough decisions, based on facts and experience."

Putz is currently the associate director for wildlife resources in the Washington headquarters office. In that post since March 1982, he has been responsible for directing the Service's largest and most diverse programs, which include the 417-unit National Wildlife Refuge System, law enforcement, migratory bird management, and animal damage control.

"I fell in love with Alaska in the mid-1950's when I spent 2½ years there during military service," Putz said. "I made up my mind then, and during a summer I spent researching diseases of salmon, that if I ever had the opportunity to return, I would go for it. I look forward to the challenges and opportunities that are unique to Alaska."

Putz said his goals will be to continue the strengthening of ties and the day-to-day working relationships with Native Corporations and groups, and State and Federal natural resource management agencies. He said he would also "listen carefully to all legitimate and concerned environmental groups and weigh their concerns in decisions that affect the conservation, management, and wise utilization of the natural resources that Congress has mandated we manage.

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"I believe the natural resources of the State of Alaska can be identified, developed, and utilized in a manner consistent with State and National needs, and also be compatible with sound management of fish, wildlife, and their habitats," Putz said.

Putz has been the U.S. representative on the Joint U.S.A.-U.S.S.R. Ecosystem Investigation of the Bering Sea since 1977, which is developing baseline and environmental data on that area to help guide possible exploratory activities.

Prior to assuming his present post, Putz spent 4 years as director of the renowned National Fisheries Center at Leetown, West Virginia. He joined the Service in 1962 as a parasitologist at Leetown, and later served as deputy associate director for research for 2 years in Washington, D.C. While Leetown director, Putz was the project leader for plant and animal ecology activities under the U.S.-U.S.S.R. Environmental Agreement and in 1979 established a new project on ichthyology and aquaculture with the Soviet Union under the same agreement. He served as an advisor to Congress during the drafting of the Toxic Substance Control Act and represented this country at the Sixth Pan American Veterinary Science Conference in Venezuela. He has also been a consultant on fishery matters to the governments of Venezuela and Israel.

A native of Clarksburg, West Virginia, Putz holds B.S. and M.S. degrees in science and zoology from the University of Iowa and a Ph.D. in biological sciences from Fordham University. He received Interior's meritorious service award in 1975.

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