

OREGON'S VANISHING WILDLIFE

A legislative interim committee has been holding meetings with sportsmen around the state in the attempt to sift the wheat from the chaff and to draw up recommendations for changes in the laws to improve Oregon's fish and game resources. The one complaint on which almost all agree is that game law enforcement is inadequate.

But these meetings are bringing out rather clearly a widespread belief that the basic commission system of handling fish and game problems needs reorganization or replacement.

The primary reason for the accelerated decline of the game resources in the last decade was available to the interim committee before it left Portland. That is the unprecedented increase in the number of hunters and anglers. The commission sold 344,200 licenses in 1946, and the figure probably reached 375,000 in 1947—more than double the pre-war figure.

Instead of a breathing spell for the fish, game birds and game animals during the war—when young men were in the armed services, gasoline was rationed and shells were hard to get—the hunting and angling pressure increased steadily, and propagation and enforcement lagged. Much more than the commission's latest policy of advising hunters and anglers to restrain their natural desires

to take limit bags will be needed, obviously, to provide the great number of licensees with even fair hunting and angling.

Game law enforcement was taken away from the game commission and given to the state police when that body was organized. It would be difficult to find an outdoorsman who honestly would contend that the checking-station, high-way-patrol type of enforcement provided by the state police has been efficient in discouraging the law violators who seem to have increased in proportionately greater numbers than the total of licensees.

Three alternatives to the present system have been suggested: (1) Strengthening the existing game division of the state police and separating its members from other police work; (2) returning to the old warden system, under the game commission; (3) establishment of a separate enforcement-conservation agency, whose supervisor would have his offices at game headquarters and would work closely with the game department, but whose authority would be independent of either the game commission or the state police.

More and more sportsmen seem to be coming around to the view that the third proposal may be the more desirable—a separate conservation force which should work co-operatively with sportsmen in predator control and other phases of game improvement, as well as being in position to enforce the game laws without being handcuffed by non-game duties or becoming involved in game department politics.

NOTICE OF RURAL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD BUDGET MEETING

Notice is hereby given, in compliance with Section 110-1207 O.C.L.A. as amended by Chapter 393 Oregon Law 1943 and Chapter 345 Oregon Law 1945 as amended by Chapter 591 Oregon Laws 1947, to the legal voters of the Rural School District of Jackson County, Oregon, that a meeting will be held at the Court House in Medford, Oregon, on the 30th day of January, 1948, at 2 o'clock P.M. for the purpose of discussing the budget of the Rural School Board for the fiscal year beginning July 1st, 1948 and ending June 30, 1949, hereinafter set forth.

BUDGET — 1948-1949

ESTIMATED RECEIPTS NONE

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES

ITEM	Estimated Expenditures—1948-49
1. Personal Service—Clerical and Legal	\$ 400.00
2. Supplies, Printing	20.00
3. Postage, Telephone and Telegraph	50.00
4. Elections and Publicity	165.00
5. Board Expenses, Travel, etc.	400.00
6. Other Miscellaneous Expenses	20.00

Total Estimated Expenditures\$1,055.00

Summary of Estimated Expenditures, Receipts, and Available Cash Balances & Tax Levy

1. Total Estimated Expenditures	\$1,055.00
2. Add estimated amount of taxes that will not be collected during the fiscal year for which this budget is made	50.00

7. Total estimated tax levy for the ensuing fiscal year\$1,105.00

INDEBTEDNESS NONE

Dated January 8, 1948, Approved by Budget Committee January 8, 1948.
Signed: C. R. BOWMAN, Clerk
M. F. STOCKMAN, Chairman, Board of Directors
HERBERT L. CARLTON, Secretary, Budget Committee
MRS. A. E. STEVENS, Chairman, Budget Committee.

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The game commission now collects about \$2,500,000 biennially, mostly from license fees, and is paying \$584,000 of it into the state police fund for enforcement that is inadequate. Sportsmen's funds also are tied for about \$90,000 biennially, money which goes into the state general fund, when the state itself should be helping to bring back and maintain out of general taxes a resource which brings wealth to all.

So far as the commission system itself is concerned, the greatest need seems to be for more authority and hence responsibility for the supervisor. There is a certain value in advisory assistance of five commissioners geographically selected who know the local problems of their areas. This value is lost when the commission attempts to execute as well as to propose or adopt policies. The suggestion has been made that commissioners should be elected—but this page does not believe that vote-getting ability is necessarily a good measurement of knowledge and sound judgment in wildlife affairs.

A skilled supervisor with adequate authority to run the fish and game show, responsible solely to the governor who in turn is responsible to voters, and an advisory commission, may be the answer.

These and other problems have been discussed with sportsmen at meetings in Roseburg, Tillamook,

Portland, Klamath Falls, Bend, Burns, Ontario, La Grande, Baker, Pendleton and Hite Dales. Meetings will be held in February in Medford, Coos Bay, Waldport, Corvallis, Eugene, Albany and Salem. The interim committee's chairman is Senator Lew Wallace. Other members are Representatives William Niskanen of Bend and Carl Hill of Days Creek; John Ebinger of Klamath Falls, represent-

ing the Isaac Walton league, and James Loder of Salem, representing the Wildlife federation.

Hunters and anglers keenly aware of the disheartening decline in a state which should have the best shooting and fishing in the nation are hoping that the report of this interim committee, with 375,000

sportsmen behind it, will start a new deal in Oregon wildlife.

(Reprinted from OREGONIAN EDITORIAL PAGE—January 14, 1948.)



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