

Crops in Oregon Suffer Losses From Pests, Birds

Deer, moles, gophers, coyotes, ground squirrels and other pests caused about \$9,000,000 worth of damage in Oregon last year according to estimates made by Oregon State University county extension agents.

Bernie Carter, OSU graduate student in fish and game management, asked agents to name major and minor pests in their counties and estimate damage to crops. In his survey, a pest was considered any bird or mammal that caused damage to agricultural crops.

Deer caused an estimated \$1.5 million damage in five of the ten counties reporting them as a number one pest. They compete with livestock for food damage trees by "horning" and browsing and raid vegetable gardens.

County agents in northwest Oregon reported moles and gophers as major pests; northeast Oregon—deer and gophers; southwest—coyotes; Lake and Klamath counties—ground squirrels. County agents listed a total of 34 nuisance animals including rats, English sparrows, dogs, foxes, wood rats, robins, sapsuckers, wild nutria and porcupines.

Twenty-nine counties listed deer as a pest.

Farmers are not the only ones who suffer from animal pests. In Yamhill county wild nutria (sometimes called oversize wharf rats) eat their way through vegetable gardens. Martlets, large burrowing animals that look like ground squirrels, chewed through a Klamath Falls television cable causing \$2500 worth of damage. Starlings, an increasing problem in Oregon, are becoming more numerous. They're a nuisance to western Oregon holly growers and contaminate feed in eastern Oregon feedlots.

According to the OSU survey, big game damage is now mainly controlled with fencing, chemical repellents and scaring devices such as firecrackers or shotgun blasts. However, county agents requested additional effective controls. It was estimated that cost of controlling these pests would amount to about one tenth of the amount of damage they cause.

Wranglers Plan For Year's Events

Committees for playdays, summer rides and entertainment for the monthly meetings were read at the meeting of the Heppner Wranglers Tuesday evening with President Everett Struckmeier in charge.

The Wranglers are busy with plans for the cutting horse show in April and selection of a princess to represent them at the Morrow county rodeo. Their representative will be chosen after tryouts February 17 at the Wrangler grounds.

Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Rood, visitors at the meeting, showed pictures for the entertainment portion of the program. Mrs. Leo Ashbeck won the evening's drawing.

Mrs. Roice (Betty) Fulleton was chosen to write for Larlat magazine and will appreciate all kinds of horse news for the publication.

Delicious refreshments were served by Mr. and Mrs. Ashbeck and by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Steagall.

Two 4-H Delegates Attending Conference At State Capitol

Martha Doherty, Heppner, and David Proudfoot, Echo, Morrow county's delegates to the Oregon 4-H Conference February 7-9, are in Salem this week to take part with 72 other delegates in the annual event of visiting the state capitol.

A visit to the meeting of the Joint Ways and Means Committee, the two houses of legislature and the judicial department are scheduled. They will meet such dignitaries as Governor Mark O. Hatfield; Ben Musa, senate president; Clarence Barton, speaker of the house; Howard Belton, state treasurer; Chief Justice William McAllister and many other state officials.

Delegates will be housed in the Marion Hotel in Salem as guests of the Sears, Roebuck Foundation. Social events such as "Get-Acquainted Parties" and dances are scheduled for each evening.

Martha is a member of the Blackhorse Livestock, and David is listed with the Pine City Saddle club.

Gets OTI Honors

Among those on the honor roll at Oregon Technical Institute is Mrs. Neal Penland (Lydia Van Houte), formerly of Heppner, who is taking accounting there. She earned a grade point average of 3.133 for the fall term. Mrs. Penland is daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Van Houte of Heppner.

Salem Scene

by Robert H. Eisner

State Tax Base Broadening "Long Overdue" Says Senate President

Senate President Ben Musa has some definite thoughts on state government, taxes, and other problems facing Oregon's Legislature. He discussed some of them earlier this week, for "Salem Scene" readers.

Although his personal legislative goals for the 1963 session are limited, he strongly advocates a broadening of the state income tax base. "It's long overdue," he claims. "We've simply got to have it, to get more people paying taxes."

Musa says the Legislature's overriding problem is to "get

enough money to pay our bills." But he doesn't feel the best answer is Governor Hatfield's "net receipts tax," which seems to have healthy bi-partisan support. Democrat Musa, a certified public accountant in The Dalles, has an alternative proposal for broadening the tax base to cover more taxpayers. It was introduced in the House by his wife, Rep. Katherin Musa (D-flood River and Wasco counties) early in the session. Commonly called the "Musa plan," it has three basic elements:

(1) Reduce personal exemptions from \$600 to \$500; (2) remove the Federal income tax as a deduction on state returns; and (3) create a minimum filing fee, ranging from \$5 to \$7.50.

Unlike the "net receipts tax" bill, which would bring in more than \$30 million in additional revenue, Musa's proposal would raise considerably less—an estimated \$4 to \$6 million in new tax money.

"We're not shooting for more than that," Sen. Musa explained. "Natural growth would increase revenues in future years, as more people come to Oregon."

He emphasizes that the "Musa plan" (H.B. 1014) "has no intent" of raising the rates of present state taxpayers. "And if it did somehow raise their taxes, we would recommend a corresponding rate deduction," he adds. In explaining that the primary purpose of his bill is to get minimal taxes from wage earners who now pay nothing, the proposed filing fee would accomplish much of this.

"Oregon will eventually have a cigarette tax," Musa predicted "because we simply have to raise the money." He supports it now, but feels that it should include all tobacco products, and not just cigarettes, as has been advocated.

Musa admits that a tax referendum is quite likely with any tax program the Legislature adopts. But he doesn't believe in "threatening or holding a club over the electorate" in warning them that if they turn down a tax increase, it will mean a big cut in basic school support.

The Senate President opposes the bill which would reduce state gasoline taxes. "They should stay the same," he said. "This is one place where we really get our money's worth. Why, I can remember—not many years ago when it used to take hours to drive a distance that modern highways make possible in just minutes now."

We asked Sen. Musa for his views on a possible tax election, which would let the voters decide on the type of new tax they prefer—if any. He is against this, he explained, "because we should have the courage to do what we're being paid for, and not shove our responsibilities off on the voters." He also questions the legality of an election which would let the people vote on various tax alternatives, "particularly if no proposal received a simple majority of all votes cast." He does feel that a "yes-or-no" tax election might be legal, however.

Musa said the Legislature should take a "long, hard look" at Oregon's unemployment compensation program. Proposals to expand benefits and broaden coverage will have a "tough time" in the Senate, he feels, unless some provision is added which would get employees to share in unemployment tax costs. These are now paid fully by employers, and Oregon has one of the five-highest rates in the nation.

Reorganization of Oregon's 50-year old workmen's compensation program is "long overdue," Musa said. "There are too many therapists running a political business. My first concern is for the injured workmen and a reorganization should be to his benefit."

He also feels that the whole state government structure is "over-bureaucratic," which is some what along the lines of Governor Hatfield's thinking that there is room for consolidation in some areas.

SKI TRAILS

By BIRDINE TULLIS

Weather conditions were far from ideal last week-end. The warm winds and rain hurt the ski area badly. Nevertheless, 33 beginners braved the slick roads for their first ski lesson at Arbuckle—proof that people are anxious to ski!

The area was in operation Saturday and Sunday. On the hill Sunday were several of the beginners perfecting what they had learned the day before at their lesson. Saw Timmy Lloyd, Marcia Sowell, Bobby Dobbs, Jim Sherman, and the Wise children, just to name a few. Orville and Barb Cutsforth and family were also trying out the slope. Orville was one of the original group that felt there was a potential for skiing in this area, and is always interested in developments in our county. There is a tremendous amount of interest in skiing in our vicinity, and it is certainly too bad that conditions have not been more favorable this year. However, we are not the only ones suffering from the lack of snow, and unusual rain and thawing. I read everywhere that old and famous snow resorts are running in the red this year due to the very poor snow conditions in the west.

Unless new snow falls this week on Arbuckle, the area will not be in operation next week-end. The club and the instructor feel that unless a quantity of good snow falls it would be foolish to attempt giving the second lesson. Those who are taking lessons and are interested, please check the window at Peck's Ski Shop for further information. We will have a snow report and news of lesson plans in the window no later than Friday night.

I have discussed snow conditions with several people that are familiar with such in our local mountains, and most are in agreement that a very great part of our snow pack usually falls in February and March. Last year at this time we had so much snow that it was almost impossible to get to the area. Don't despair—we will be skiing on Arbuckle soon again. Spring skiing is great!

Ken Peck and a group of local skiers were over to the new Anthony Lakes area last week. This area is between La Grande and Baker. They were much impressed with the potential of that area. It is being developed by a group of businessmen in La Grande. It is an area that is blessed with a plentiful amount of powder snow for a long period each year. They just recently started operation but claim they could have been in operation since November had their lives been completed. They have a Poma-lift at present with future plans for a chair.

Statistics from an article in Post—last season 3,000,000 Americans took to the slopes and spent a total of over \$335,000,000 on equipment and accommodations—and even more this year. Skiing is a wonderful hobby, and a big business!

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