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FISH AND WILDLIFE NEWS

A NEWSLETTER OF

THE NATIONAL MILITARY FISH AND WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION

VOL. II No. 3 January 1986

EDITORS CORNER

If anyone is still interested in any bylaw changes or amendments, you must circulate it to the membership prior to 27 Feb. Contact Rich Griffith for mailing labels (see back page).

This newsletter is my last as editor, and if nothing else I hope I've made things easier for my successor. There are a few items to remember for future submissions:

1. Double-spaced typed articles are preferred. Written corrections are fine, but do not send rough drafts expecting substantial editorial revision.
2. Please try to limit articles to 350 words.

ViewPoint may be the strongest section of our newsletter. The membership response to issues of concern has shown the enthusiasm of NMFWA. Personally, I would like to see the Installation Report expanded to feature more than one DoD base. Corps of Engineers offices should not feel excluded, and may wish to report on their current fish and wildlife activities. In addition, there are lots of short news items of interest to NMFWA members. Let the membership hear about them in Noteworthy News. A major goal of FAWN is to make the reader feel like a part of the organization, but only membership contributions will allow us to accomplish that.

Forestry and wildlife management appear to have created quite a controversy within and outside of NMFWA. Although Fort Lewis is a major timber-

producing installation, our relationship (Fish and Wildlife) with Forestry could be labeled as "good" and "improving". This may be attributed to our understanding of timber production; a mutual ability to compromise; and the lack of "hardcore" foresters in the section. We have informally discussed the possibility of establishing a position of Forestry/Wildlife Coordinator to help insure balanced resource management. This may be "food for thought" for those installations that seem to have insurmountable problems.

I hope as many members as possible attend the Reno meeting.



Jock

Jock

NMFWA BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ELECTED PERSONNEL

President—Gene Stout
 Past President—Lud Clark
 Vice President—Joe Ward
 Secretary/Treasurer—Tom Warren
 At Large Director—West—Al Pfister
 At Large Director—East—Linton Swindell
 At Large Nominations Committee—Marlo Acock
 Program Chairman—Larry Adams

THE WILD SIDE

Gene Stout - NMFVA President

In March you will elect a new president, and I hope he or she has the pleasure to take as much pride in our fledgling organization as I have. No...Chicken Little...the sky did not fall when we organized. Instead, our organization grew beyond our wildest expectations. Even our most optimistic supporters did not believe we would achieve over 150 members, yet we are well over 200, and 250 seems likely.

The world did not end when we expressed our beliefs to the DoD. Our views on important issues are now reasonably well known, and in some cases actions have been taken to resolve our problems. We did affect a piece of legislation, and the legislation was markedly changed to better support our positions. The right to speak out on such matters is both legally correct and essential.

We made major strides in promoting communication among our members. This newsletter has only begun to develop, and it is already a super accomplishment thanks to a lot of hard work by our volunteers. The word is starting to get out on job openings thanks to some of our committee work. We are talking to each other much more than ever in the past, and I think we are communicating better with our higher command levels than ever before.

Our meeting in Reno will demonstrate just how far we have come with regard to getting together and discussing our business as envisioned by a small group of us seven years ago. I expect well over 100 members plus many others to attend, and Defense will have, by far, the largest attendance of any agency. I get tired of hearing DoD mentioned as an afterthought among federal resource management agencies. Reno will help demonstrate that we are rapidly becoming leaders in our field, not just a bunch of hunting guides for the elite military. Personally, I may spend a lot of time bitching about our problems, but there is no federal agency in which I would rather work in than DoD. I know many of you agree.

Our organization is strong! We are fairly small in number, and the nature of our organization will insure we stay that way, but one excellent measure of our strength is the degree of commitment among our members. As president, I can insure you that the organization has a broad base of workers. Many organizations only have a few workers, and these organizations are prone to self-destruction. Heck...we have volunteers working on the newsletter; others on the program; some on issues; and others on internal organization management. We have active participation at all levels within the system, and that is a real plus. We have a diverse membership with varied viewpoints, yet we remain dedicated to our goal of fish and wildlife management on our lands.

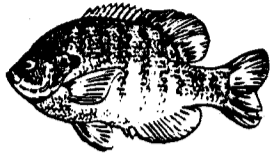
If I can offer one sincere hope, it is that we do not try to solve all the problems and become an all-purpose natural resources organization. Our strength comes from our dedication to fish and wildlife. The best way to stick up for our critters and their habitats is to stay that way. Natural resources management in DoD, and everywhere else, is always a compromise. We need to insure that fish and wildlife interests are strongly supported, and let decisionmakers work out the compromises. I understand that this approach will not be viewed as "proper" by all, but it has been my experience that those who prefer to use the resources in ways different from ours will stand up for their beliefs very strongly. We need to do the same.

We have a long way to go. The progress we have made is only the tip of the iceberg. I do not believe we will normally be as active in the political arena as this past year, but this has been a special year due to the Sikes Act legislation. I believe our organization will gradually get a reputation as a real asset to DoD as we continue to set milestones for improved training and communication and take reasonable stands on major issues confronting us.

How do I view our status as an organization on the whole? Our strengths...the annual training session, the newsletter, and our dedicated volunteers. Our weaknesses...job information; under-

representation at command level appear integration among management, sportsman services, and enforcement; and our lack of effective communication with our counterparts in forestry, range and agronomy. Our biggest challenge...training damage. Our future...exceptionally bright.

Thanks for the opportunity. It's been great!



TREASURERS REPORT

As of 30 November 1985, the NMFWA has a checking account balance of \$127.03. T. Warren

INSTALLATION REPORT

BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE

Barksdale AFB is a 22,000 acre installation located in northern Louisiana. Unimproved grounds cover 18,000 acres, including 6 lakes ranging in size from 20 to 600 acres. Barksdale is a closed installation, so the state will not assist with materials or manpower for fish and wildlife management. Hunting and fishing fees help fund the fish and wildlife program, with projected 1985 revenues of \$19,000. Most of this has been targeted for fisheries management projects.

Deer herd management began on Barksdale in 1958 with a bucks-only season, but either-sex hunting seasons have been in effect ever since. Season lengths have varied from 5 to 21 days. The annual harvest averages 100 deer and usually includes several bucks over 200 pounds. Hunters are allowed on a first-come first-served basis and limited to one hunter per 40 acres. Check station information is used to accomplish herd management. Browse and herd surveys are conducted in areas with low harvest. Habitat improvement measures include timber harvest and prescribed burning.

Pine upland are burned on an approximate three year rotation and some timber harvest is planned every seven years. If adequate deer numbers are noted, then hunter access trails are constructed and the area publicized. Illegal hunting is the largest deer management problem on Barksdale.

Small game is managed on Barksdale by manipulating forest practices, prescribed burning, and wildlife plots. When necessary, agricultural plantings are used to supplement natural food. Cost and manpower requirements limit plantings to 50 acres. Commercial timber work provides most of the wildlife habitat improvement.

One half of the forested acreage on Barksdale is within the Red River alluvial floodplain. Although drainage and river levee work has completely controlled natural overflows, water control structures allow flooding of 800 acres of bottomland hardwoods for wintering waterfowl. These greentree reservoirs are flooded utilizing lakewater releases, seasonal rainfall, and diesel pumps. The pumps, along with two water control structures, were provided to Barksdale by the Corps of Engineers as mitigation for a flood control project. One greentree reservoir is closed to hunting as a waterfowl refuge.

Aquatic weeds create a tremendous problem in the shallow lakes on Barksdale. Two years ago emergent weeds including water hyacinth, lotus, alligator weed, and hydrocotyle completely covered the surface of the largest lake. Dense mats of water hyacinth were impossible to penetrate with a motorboat. Tests showed no dissolved oxygen below 18" in depth on several smaller lakes covered with duckweed. Weekly spraying with herbicides was successful in controlling these problems. The current budget for herbicides is \$10,000. In addition, submerged mosses have been controlled by stocking grass carp (white amur) at a rate of 10 per acre. The Fisheries Department of Louisiana Tech University monitors lake water quality and makes management recommendations.



NOTEWORTHY NEWS

1986 NMFVA MEETING

The 1986 NMFVA meeting is coming up on 21-26 March in Reno, Nevada, so make your travel plans soon. Most of you should have already received a 51st North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference. If not, contact the Wild. Mgt. Institute, 1101 14th St. NW, Suite 725, Wash. D.C. 20005. The NMFVA meeting schedule is listed within that program. An abbreviated training session program and business agenda has been included in this newsletter. Contact Program Chairman Larry Adams if you need more information. Additional meetings may be arranged in Reno (see Noteworthy News). Registration fees, payable at the meeting, have been set at \$15. If travel funds are tight and you need a roommate, call Gene Stout at Fort Sill (405) 351-4324, AV 639-4324.

Nominations for Elected NMFVA Board Members

The following nominations have been submitted for new NMFVA Board members. Elections will be held during the NMFVA business meeting. Additional nominations may be made prior to this time. The Program Chairman and Newsletter Editor will be appointed by the President.

President-Tom Warren Vice Pres.-Larry Adams
Sec./Treas.-Bruce Reinhardt; Jock Beall; Tom Bryce
At-Large Nominations Committee-Marlo Acock
At-Large Director/West-Slater Buck; Patty Worthing;
Scott Klinger
At-Large Director/East-Rick McWhite; Rich Griffith;
Tom Wray

DoD Raptor Survey- Al Pfister of Fort Carson is conducting a survey to assess the extent of raptor management programs at various installations throughout the U.S. The results of the survey will be presented at the Southwest Raptor Management Symposium and Workshop in Tucson, Arizona in May 1986. The paper's main emphasis will be to create an awareness of current raptor programs while also identifying the opportunities for raptor research on military installations.

NMFVA Constitution and Bylaws Amendment

Tom Warren, NMFVA Secretary/Treas., has proposed the following amendment to the existing NMFVA Constitution and Bylaws as amended on 21 November 1984.

Article III, Section 2. Board of Directors.

"It is proposed that the membership of the NMFVA Board of Directors be increased to include two additional At-Large Directors, one each from the east and west, and the Newsletter Chairperson. If adopted the membership of the Board would then consist of the four officers, four At-Large Directors, the Program Chairperson, and the Newsletter Chairperson."

It is felt that adoption of this proposed amendment would significantly increase regional representation of the NMFVA as well as increase organizational effectiveness.

Consideration of this proposed amendment will be addressed during the business session of the NMFVA meeting in Reno next March. The membership is reminded that the Constitution and Bylaws may be amended at any business meeting of the NMFVA by a two-thirds majority of the voting membership, provided a written notification of intended changes is presented to such members at least 30 days prior to the vote.

New Game Animal Expands Range To Fort Lewis-

In late November the first known Virginia opossum, Didelphis marsupialis, was taken by a fur trapper at Fort Lewis, Wa. Transplants from Oklahoma and other parts of the south were jubilant. J. Stephenson.

Wildlife Management Short Courses- Colorado

State University will be offering two workshops sponsored by the Dept. of Fishery and Wildlife Biology. The Wildlife Management Workshop, 27-31 January 1986, is designed as a refresher course for mid-career professionals with major responsibilities in wildlife management. The Wildlife Management Short Course, 31 March-4 April 1986, is conducted for layman or agency personnel without wildlife training who desire an overview of wildlife ecology and conservation. Space is limited, so for more information contact Office of Conference Services, CSU, Co. (303) 491-7501.

VIEWPOINT

Viewpoint does not necessarily represent the official position of NMFWA.

HUNTER EDUCATION AND STEELSHOT

I am writing in regard to a letter in Volume 2 No. 2 on the steelshot issue. While I agree that non-toxic shot is a necessity, I disagree that the hunter's feelings and interests are not important considerations.

Wildlife professionals have a vested interest in retaining the hunter's cooperation. The hunter is the key to the success of any of the proposed regulatory programs. The only alternative not requiring hunter cooperation would be the regulation / prohibition of leadshot manufacture. I personally favor this type of regulation if an immediate ban is to be implemented.

I agree that hunter education is the key to hunter cooperation. However, the focus must be the hunter's interest not statistics and theories of waterfowl mortality. Hunter education should focus on the ballistic characteristics of steelshot and the changes in hunting tactics that must be made.

The studies of shotshell effectiveness, which have confused the lead versus steel issue with arguments of increased crippling mortality, made the assumption that steel and lead shotshells are interchangeable. Based on a review of ballistics and other literature, patterning of a variety of shotshell loads and field use, it is my opinion that this assumption is not valid.

31 April? A hunter using steelshot must re-evaluate the shot size used, the choke required and the maximum effective distance for each shot size / choke combination. My personal experience has also led me to conclude that sight pictures must be adjusted to compensate for the difference in ballistic performance of steelshot.

Waterfowl Management Meeting- Several NMFWA members have expressed an interest in discussing waterfowl management on military installations. Short of establishing an official committee on the subject, an informal group meeting can be arranged in Reno at the NMFWA meeting. Tuesday afternoon, March 25th, following the morning DoD branch meetings, has been tentatively set. Confirmation of this and a time will be contingent on the availability of a room. If necessary, a hotel room will suffice.

The goal will be to exchange useful information, techniques, and discuss management problems. Subjects may include breeding and wintering habitat, hunting regulations, refuges, BASH, wood duck management, food plots, or any other related topic. Those of you who wish to contribute information are welcomed to illustrate your topic with a few slides. Interested members may contact Tom Poole, Fort Devens, (617)796-3021 (AVT 256) or Jock Beall (see back page).

DoD Natural Resources Computer Newsletter

Nancy Michaelson, former Installation Forester at Fort McCoy, has established a computer newsletter applicable to all DoD natural resource personnel. Everyone in DoD is invited to contribute information about how their installation uses computers to assist in natural resource management. Send contributions to: 306 Walnut Dr. Fredericksburg, VI 22405, or call (703)371-7522. Newsletter copies for DoD are available from Nancy or: NAVY - Mark Decot or Pat Kine (AV221-0427); ARMY - Don Cole (AV285-8697); AIR FORCE - Bill Korman (AV970-6481) or Bill Echols (AV970-6236); Marine Corps - Marlo Acock (AV227-1890).

1986 NorthEast Fish and Wildlife Conference

NorthEast fish and wildlife biologists will hold their 1986 meeting in Hershey, PA, on 27-31 April. The "NorthEast Section" of the NMFWA will hold an informal meeting on 28 April at 2000hrs. The informal setting will focus around the free exchange of ideas. Interested people are invited to attend. T. Wray II, Philadelphia, PA.

I believe that a properly trained and educated hunter can use steelshot as effectively as lead while the uneducated will cripple more birds. If hunters are convinced that steel-shot can be an effective hunting tool, the controversy is over. Let's do ourselves and the resource a favor and educate the hunter rather than try to ram regulations down his throat. Thomas C. Walker Aston, Pa.

N.R. Funding Proposal Controversial

I feel compelled to respond to an article, "D.O.D. Natural Resources Funding Proposal" by Jim Omans that appeared in the last issue of Fish and Wildlife News.

Understanding fully that our resources on D.O.D. lands, by policy, must be managed for multiple use I cannot understand a philosophy that our timber resources must be managed in the same manner as those on commercial forest land. On lands with huge capital investments in the forests, the "timber production first" philosophy makes sense, but it has no place on lands where the resource is managed for multiple use. Wildlife on commercial forests take second place; on multiple use lands the forests must first be managed to dovetail into the multiple use concept. Goodness knows, we have enough lands managed for commercial forestry. DOD lands, managed to provide recreational resources as a second mission behind the needs for military training and operations, demand better treatment. It is in this context that I wish to address Mr. Oman's article. As a forester he has a natural bias towards his discipline, in which he is obviously very competent. However, the forestry concepts under which he obviously operates, must be modified to comply with our mandate of managing for multiple use, which means managing to benefit wildlife first with commercial gains from forestry operations only a secondary consideration.

The first issue he points to is funds for forestry and wildlife programs. He beats his chest how forestry programs are self-

supported. I agree, they are, but at tremendous cost to wildlife. Like wildlife programs anywhere, the results do not translate to dollars and cents, but the profit motive is obviously the mind set of the author. The forestry program, as he conducts it, provides timber to a few timber companies while the wildlife program benefits the entire public. Using his rationale it would be better to net all the fish on a reservation and sell them to a fish market rather than holding them as a natural resource for the enjoyment of all. Certainly wildlife programs can be made more cost effective, by increasing user fees. However this would deny some from using a resource they have already bought and paid for as taxpayers.

In addition, if the wildlife manager were allowed to use all of the funds he collected for the purpose of wildlife management, he would be able to run a self sustaining program, especially if the forestry programs on his installation were supportive of and not counter-productive to the wildlife program. Both Sikes Act and Pittman-Robertson funds, intended for wildlife, are presently unavailable to the DOD wildlife program. Further, our fiscal position is additionally weakened by some installations that siphon off hunting and fishing fees for other MSA activities that are unrelated to fish and wildlife management.

The author believes he has a "revolutionary idea" in that all natural resource money be pooled into one account. He's right- it's revolutionary because it would probably start one! I don't think the author is living in the real world. Maybe he can operate out of one checkbook with his colleagues in the Navy, but I have trouble operating out of just one at home. Who is going to make the decision how much money the wildlife program gets? The forester? Until we bring aboard foresters trained to manage for wildlife this would continue the counterproductive way our habitat is now being managed.

The wildlife manager already has to contend with a Fish and Wildlife Fund Committee that determines how our funds will be expended.

Typically, committee members have no fish or wildlife experience and on many installations the wildlife manager is not even a member of the committee. Jim, how would you like to have such a committee manage your funds? Further, I doubt that many hunters or fishermen would be thrilled to find that their fees paid for a clear cut through their best hunting area, for all of the shade to be removed from a favorite stream, or for the removal of what you call "cull" trees that provide homes to squirrels, raccoons, wood ducks, owls and numerous cavity dwelling song birds.

Wildlife riding on the coattails of foresters? Paying lip service to multiple use management? Who are you trying to fool, Jim? For years it has been your forestry programs that take and take with little regard for wildlife habitat and no funding for restoration. Your answer to restoration has been monoculture-creating more biological deserts for wildlife. When multiple use management came into vogue it was the foresters who squawked until they discovered they could hide behind this buzzword. Clearcuts quickly became the panacea for multiple use problems. They could be used to "create deer habitat, increase recreational use, improve visuals, and increase training areas." So naturally, since foresters were able to get the cut out and do "so much" for multiple use, who would be more suited to supervise all natural resources? Who's paying lip service? Hell, we're not trying to ride your coattails; we're trying to get you to mitigate the loss of habitat your dollar-oriented programs cause with your timber programs. That's why we need a bill like HR 1202 to put us and the recreationalists on equal footing with you and your commercial interests.

I don't want to give readers the impression that I hate foresters or that I condemn clearcutting, but I have learned to look for the "catch" when foresters offer me something. I look forward to the day when both of our roles are orchestrated to

produce a symphony that will truly benefit wildlife, not simply a song you foresters sing on the way to the bank, thinking you have accomplished something.

There is a little sketch at the bottom of Mr. Omans' article that probably has nothing to do with it, but it is very appropriate. It consists of a logging truck up on the hill and a pond at the base of the hill. It is analogous to forestry and wildlife on DOD installations, where forestry is at the top of the hill and wildlife and their following are at the bottom of the pond. (Ed. note: The sketch was chosen simply because it illustrated the forestry theme. No hidden meanings were intended.)

Multiple use? You don't know the meaning of the word.

I welcome any comments. Carol O. Martin
Fort Pickett, Va.



THE TRANSFER STATION

Tom Wilmers, formerly from Fort Sill, is now a wildlife biologist for the Fish and Wildlife Service at the National Key Deer NWR at Big Pine Key, Florida. Congratulations, Tom, and enjoy the hurricanes.

JOBS

Range Conservationist, GS-7.
Ecologist(2), GS-7/9, (Air/Noise and Toxic/Haz).
Fort Carson, Co. POC: Tom Warren (303) 579-4828/
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