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FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS
COOPERATE TO ENFORCE GAME LAWS

The recently published directory, compiled in the Biological Survey, United States Department of Agriculture, of officials and organizations concerned with the protection of birds and game (Department Circular No. 398-C), shows the character of the many groups interested in the conservation of wild life. The protection of game animals and birds, fur animals, and fish is seen to be backed by the Federal Government, by State governments, and by international, national, State, and local organizations, and is encouraged by Audubon Societies and other nature clubs. So numerous are these that purely local organizations are omitted from the directory, and only those are listed that are of State-wide scope or larger. These number 210, of which 70 are governmental agencies, 19 are international, national, or Canadian organizations, and 121 are State or Provincial associations, including Audubon Societies and State divisions of the Izaak Walton League of America.

Whereas the functions of all have to do with the encouragement of wild life conservation in an educational or other way, actual enforcement of game, fur, and fish laws is in the hands of Federal or State governmental agencies. The publication of the coordinated lists of the officials and organizations is only one form of cooperation on the part of the Federal Government. In the enforcement of the game and fur laws there is also cooperation of such direct nature as to give concern to violators and others not inclined to observe the laws. Two concrete examples will demonstrate how the Federal and State Governments are cooperating, one showing how a State is assisting in the enforcement of Federal game regulations and the other how the United States game wardens employed by the Biological Survey aid the various States in apprehending violators of their game and fur laws.

State Cooperation

Recent Federal regulations under the migratory-bird treaty act made the opening date of the season on wild ducks in California October 16, and thus rendered ineffective the provisions of the State law that would have opened the season on October 1. Under the same regulations the season might continue until January 31, except for the fact that the California law now in force would be violated by hunting after January 15. Both the State law and the Federal regulations contemplated a season of $3\frac{1}{2}$ months, but the 4 months maximum extent under the conflicting dates is actually shortened to 3 months, the Federal regulations cutting off the first half of October allowed by the State, and the State law lopping off the last half of January provided by the Federal regulations.

To help enforce the Federal regulations, the California Fish and Game Commission not only gave wide publicity to the deferred opening date but at the same time served warning that the provisions of the regulations adopted by the Secretary of Agriculture and promulgated by the President would be rigidly enforced by all its State wardens, who were instructed to cooperate with the United States wardens to this end. The only hope that California's sportsmen have of enjoying a full waterfowl season of $3\frac{1}{2}$ months lies in the possibility that the State legislature, when it meets in January, 1927, may act on a proposed measure to add two weeks to the end of the season to make it conform with the season allowed under the Federal regulations.

Federal Cooperation

The Federal Government in turn can give assistance to State authorities through the fact that United States game wardens, in the course of their activities in the enforcement of the migratory-bird and other Federal game laws, constantly encounter violations of State laws. Each of these wardens is thus in position to render substantial cooperation to State authorities in the enforcement of their game, fish, and fur legislation. Examination by United States game wardens of the records of raw-fur receiving houses has proved a fertile field of cooperation, and thousands of reports of apparent violations of State laws protecting fur animals and regulating the shipment of pelts are annually referred by Federal wardens to State game authorities for investigation. In many instances it is necessary to follow up these reports and still further aid the State in prosecutions by obtaining consignee affidavits covering the receipt of shipments and the original canceled checks for payment, and in many cases the original correspondence between the shipper and the consignee. There is a good percentage of State convictions based on this information, and the value of this Federal service is being more and more appreciated by the various State game departments. For the past few years penalties and forfeitures accruing to the States as a result of information furnished by United States wardens have amounted to from \$20,000 to \$25,000 annually.

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