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LONG-RANGE PLANNING NECESSARY TO SAVE NATION'S WILDLIFE, FEDERAL OFFICIAL SAYS

One of the most important needs in wildlife conservation work is long-range planning on the part of State game commissions, Albert M. Day, of the Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior, told the convention of the Western Association of Fish and Game Commissioners meeting in Salt Lake City today (June 5).

Conservationists from the far western States are attending the convention to discuss problems of mutual interest.

"Long range planning is what most of the States are short on," Day declared, "and long range planning is as sound in conservation work as it is in other human undertakings."

Day is in charge of the Federal agency's Division of Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration, which administers the Pittman-Robertson Act. Under this Act, Congress apportions money each year for wildlife conservation projects in the States. The States pay 25 percent of the costs and the Federal Government 75 percent.

"If the States will take advantage of the Pittman-Robertson program to study the fundamental questions of administration," Day continued, "and if

they will concentrate on building long-time management programs and will project their future courses of action on 5 and 10-year periods, the States will stabilize wildlife conservation throughout the United States and guard against disruptions that may be ahead."

Some States were prepared with long-range programs when the Pittman-Robertson Act went into effect, he said, but some others seemed to lack understanding of their own needs.

"On the whole, however, we can look with pride to the accomplishments made possible by the Pittman-Robertson program," he told the assembled western game commissioners. "Prior to the advent of the Pittman-Robertson program, the State game departments had sufficient funds, in most cases, to do only the most essential jobs."

Now the States can engage in basic research work and begin developing game habitat, Day continued. More than 275 trained technicians have been added to the staffs of game departments throughout the United States since the Pittman-Robertson Act went into effect. "They are giving new impetus to the administration of the nation's wildlife resources, and their influence is already becoming evident," the official declared.

In the last 3 years Congress has made \$5,000,000 available to the States for the restoration of their wildlife resources. With the sums contributed by the States, the total available for this work in that period totals over \$6,500,000.

Forty-Four States now have active projects underway, and Montana and Florida, both recently qualified, will soon have programs started, the official announced. Nevada and Georgia are the only States not participating in the program.

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