

ADDRESS OF ARNIE J. SUOMELA, COMMISSIONER, U. S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE WILLIAMSON COUNTY TOURIST AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION, AT CARTERVILLE, ILLINOIS, FEBRUARY 17, 1958

I'm certainly grateful for this opportunity to visit southern Illinois. It has provided me a chance to get first-hand, on-the-scene knowledge about our installations here which are so important to you. It also permits me to outline for you in a general way the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's basic philosophies with respect to the important field of outdoor recreation.

Since the end of World War II there has been an increased national awareness of the importance of outdoor recreation. Colleges have added curricula leading to degrees in outdoor recreation education; industries in seeking dispersal and expansion sites have placed opportunity for employee outdoor recreation high on their list of area prerequisites; Federal and State agencies have intensified their programs for diversified and year-round public recreational uses of public lands; people generally have begun to take account of the economic potential of this thing called outdoor recreation.

Your own Southern Illinois University is a collegiate leader in the field of outdoor recreation education. The University's Area Services Division has been most effective in arousing the public interest about the importance of recreation to Southern Illinois which you so affectionately call "Little Egypt".

We, in Washington, have been following the stimulating growth of outdoor recreation in Southern Illinois through the reports of our Crab Orchard

National Wildlife Refuge personnel. We also have shared in this growth through the multiple use programs developed on that important area by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

We and you are proud of the growth of the organized group camps on Little Grassy Lake. We also have been pleased to provide the use of the land and managed wildlife crops for field trialing.

Our wildlife management program on Crab Orchard developed the waterfowl potential from no Canada goose usage of the area to an attraction of 92,000 Canada geese this past fall. At the same time, hunting success has risen from the harvest of a few geese in the 1940's to a kill of 19,000 Canada geese this past season.

Public recreational use of the refuge generally has risen from a few thousand visitor-days in the 1940's to an estimated 1,360,000 recreational visitor-use days in 1957. The completion of Devils Kitchen Lake and our already formulated policy of leasing adjacent public lands for private recreational cottage sites soon will be another step forward in recreation for your county.

It is not surprising that some of the industries located on the refuge chose to use the available lease facilities because the community provided all this opportunity for employee outdoor recreation. Not only have there been economic benefits for you, but these new industries also have brought you valuable civic workers for your community projects.

Crab Orchard is one of 276 National Wildlife Refuges in the United States. Our Wildlife Refuge Program is concerned with a series of major objectives.

Our first objective is to protect migratory birds in such a way that we will have an annual residual brood stock to perpetuate the resource. Then we are concerned with the preservation through public ownership of the segment of the overall migratory bird breeding, migration, and wintering habitat needed for the management required to maintain the basic bird populations involved. We are also concerned with the protection and preservation of endangered species of wildlife and its habitat. Finally, we seek to provide continuing opportunity for public enjoyment of these migratory bird and other wildlife resources.

The management and accompanying development of a wildlife refuge in a sense create a recreational oasis in a locality. Somewhat the same basic necessities are required for an outdoors recreational site as are required for a wildlife refuge. Specifically, you need land of sufficient acreage when you provide for the dispersal of either game or humans. For both you also need water, adequate and proper vegetation, and avenues of accessibility. In the case of Crab Orchard, because of the unique character of this area, we also must give here special consideration to the demands of industry. This is a different situation than on most of our refuges.

In order to adequately manage toward the end of meeting the primary objectives of our refuges, and also facilitate the coordination here of uses for wildlife, agriculture, education, industry and recreation, it was necessary that a recreational policy for the Crab Orchard Refuge be set and adhered to. This policy is to provide opportunities up to a point where there is still no damage to wildlife values. Objectively, under this policy, our recreational management

on designated areas of the Crab Orchard Refuge has four major aims.

We seek to provide maximum opportunity for public hunting and fishing. We also supply daytime recreational opportunity in the forms of picnicking, boating and related water sports, swimming, hiking and sightseeing. In the group camp field we service the basic needs of supervised youth groups. Finally, we provide for controlled private recreational cottage or cabin development.

You, better than I, can judge the measure of success of the Service's past and present recreational management on this refuge. You have personally witnessed the use of these public facilities soar annually. This advance has been achieved, I'm happy to add, partly and very properly because of the initiative of some of your local people -- specifically, through the personal investments made by the Crab Orchard Lake and Little Grassy Lake concessionaires; the improvements and personal investment of the public membership of the Crab Orchard Boat and Yacht Club, and the expansion of hotel and motel facilities within the county since 1950.

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service as a public service agency must and will point its continuing management of Crab Orchard towards keeping compatible the wildlife, industrial and recreational uses for the greatest public benefit. Our recreational management program, to be most effective, must be constantly directed toward the four major aims I have mentioned.

To provide maximum opportunity for public hunting and fishing, we will hold--when game populations warrant--controlled hunts for some of the upland game species. On the three major lakes, our fisheries management will emphasize a diversified sports fisheries. In the area of daytime recreation, when funds permit we will improve maintenance of recreational facilities in an effort to strive for quality rather than quantity in serving the public. We will constantly improve facilities for public day use and supervised camping. We will also improve roads for accessibility to hunting, fishing, and boat launching sites and increase the numbers of picnic tables and sanitary facilities.

We will also give attention to regulations and other management aimed at achieving maximum public safety on and enjoyment of the lands and waters of the area. Such regulation already calls for water zoning which permits unlimited horsepower boat use on Crab Orchard Lake, and limits to 6 horsepower motors used on Little Grassy Lake to insure the safety of the children in the organized camp program.

Maintaining a harvestable crop and providing an opportunity to publicly take fish and game is a momentous task, I assure you. It is our responsibility but it cannot be achieved unless we work together efficiently in a close partnership. That, I assure you, we will do to the limit of our ability.

Our joint endeavors in this fish and wildlife recreational field are most worthwhile tasks which serve the great needs not only of our citizens today but of those who will come after us.

It is difficult to measure the total of the intangible values man enjoys during a day in the outdoors - fishing, hunting, watching wildlife or just finding peace and quiet in scenes of natural beauty. However, the importance of outdoor relaxation to a healthy America is quite obvious. In the face of tomorrow's hurtling existence -- even into outer space -- we must have interludes of peace and quiet to relieve the pressures of this accelerated way of life. Certainly tranquilizer pills are no adequate substitute for outdoor recreation.

Not only is recreational opportunity such as we are discussing an essential ingredient of America's programs for the health of her people, but there are great economic values. They are measurable. In fact, the Service did arrange to have them measured recently through a nation-wide economic survey.

This survey showed nearly 25 million people spending close to 3 billion dollars a year for 500 million days of fishing and hunting sport. Sportsmen are driving 10,400,000,000 miles and buying \$1,300,000,000 worth of equipment annually. The total expenditures in this recreational field exceed all doctor bills, all telephone and telegraph bills, all bills for household electricity -- and the volume is still growing.

When you add to these fishing and hunting expenditures the money spent by the 66 million people who find recreation in bird watching, wildlife photography and other forms of nature study, we really are dealing with

big business. Clearly, fish and wildlife recreation is important to the American people and the direction and scope of our joint efforts is everybody's concern.

We in the Fish and Wildlife Service are looking forward to our opportunities to contribute to the partnership effort by the Federal Government, the States, and private agencies interested in fish and wildlife, which will meet tomorrow's needs. Only by full team-work can we achieve the massive effort which is called for. The jobs involved cannot be done by the Federal Government alone, or by the States alone, or by private agencies alone. All of us must share in them and I'm confident that we will. I again assure you that the Fish and Wildlife Service, under the leadership of Secretary of the Interior Seaton, and the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife, Mr. Leffler, is dedicated to that full partnership effort.

In closing, I want to reiterate how happy I am to have had this opportunity to become better informed about this area which is involved in our partnership. What I have learned today will help us to contribute more effectively to an improved program in the future.

X X X