



The goal for waterfowl production areas in the three States of Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota is 600,000 acres in fee and 1,150,000 acres in easements for a total of 1,750,000 acres.

As of July 31, 1962, firm contracts had been entered into for fee title to 37,608 acres, or 6% of the 600,000 acres to be acquired in fee. As of the same date, easements had been acquired on 7,079.60 acres, or .6% of the easement total. This comprised a total of 44,687.62 acres, or nearly 3% of the goal.

This past year we bought 238 different tracts of land in these prairie States at an average cost of \$26.46 an acre and at the same time took easements on 120 tracts at a cost of \$6.47 an acre.

Funds have been programed for fiscal year 1963 to acquire an additional 43,500 acres in fee and 51,325 acres in easements in these three States. Whether these lands will be acquired will depend upon obtaining the Governor's approval in each State. This program is based upon estimated receipts from "duck stamp" sales of \$3,000,000, plus the \$7,000,000 advance appropriation for the wetlands program. Should the duck stamp receipts total \$4,000,000, the small waterfowl production areas acquisition program for 1963 will amount to 70,000 acres in fee and 91,000 acres in easements, or a total of 161,000 acres. This amounts to about 9% of the total goal so that at the end of fiscal year 1963, the program should be nearly 12% complete.

We have found the prices of land steadily increasing. This does not fashion too pleasant a picture for the future. For your information, before 1961, the land we had acquired for wildlife refuges had cost us an average of \$12.40 an acre. In fiscal 1961, this average price increased to \$69.39 an acre, while in the 1962 fiscal year just ended the average price to us was \$86.71 per acre. I believe you realize that we are now buying more expensive land than we bought formerly, but even at that, the per acre value is being steadily "upped" as we try to acquire new habitat.

Several people have asked me about where this so-called "duck stamp" money goes--what percentage here and what percentage there. Under the heading of administration, we find we are spending 16 cents of each dollar; our Solicitor, who is our legal mind, gets a quarter of a cent of each dollar; the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission gets four mills; the Post Office, which handles our duck stamp sales, gets a cent and a quarter, and about 83 cents of each dollar actually goes into the purchase of refuges and production areas.

In the year 1963, it is our present plan to ask for four meetings of the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission--one in February 1963; another in April; another in June; and another in August. We intend to have ready for presentation at these meetings 36 proposed new refuges for a total of 329,810 acres.

I think that you know that since March 15, 1961, the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission approved 11 new refuges, totaling 106,105 acres.

As of August 22, we had approval for 74,711 acres in the Atlantic Flyway; 54,195 acres in the Mississippi Flyway; 67,442 acres in the Central Flyway; and 42,640 acres in the Pacific Flyway.

Our goal in the 7-year land acquisition program is to have 270,000 acres in the Atlantic Flyway; 400,000 acres for refuges and 189,000 acres for waterfowl production area in the Mississippi Flyway; 260,000 acres for refuges and 1,561,000 acres for waterfowl production in the Central Flyway; and 270,000 acres for refuges in the Pacific Flyway. These figures, mind you, are the figures that we project for the 7-year accelerated program.

We realize full well that there is much for us to learn about proper management of migratory waterfowl and waterfowl habitat. For that reason, we have just finished taking options on 500 acres in six ownerships near Jamestown, North Dakota, for the establishment of a Northern Great Plains Wildlife Research Station.

Near to, but not adjacent to, this area we are planning a 3,360-acre research substation.

The more knowledge we have, the better job of management we can do.

It is necessary that our Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife take full advantage of acquisition opportunities when they present themselves and it is more than likely that we shall run out of Flyway Council priorities unless these Councils take positive steps to speed up their acquisition recommendations.

We strongly urge this action!

At the same time, we feel that the Councils must modify limitations, recognizing that such limitations have less validity in the 7-year stepped-up opportunity timetable.

I do not think it is necessary for me to discuss with you our waterfowl production areas procedures, but I can assure you that we are taking every possible opportunity to keep our acquisitions in harmony with the thinking and desires of the residents of the areas where we want to build installations.

I think, too, that you know of the acquisition criteria which we have.

We have divided this into three groups--high priority, moderate priority, and low priority--and we are following a definite line to try to acquire the high-priority lands just as rapidly as possible.

I think you know, too, that section 3 of Public Law 87,383, the authorizing legislation for the \$105,000,000 loan fund, states that:

"\* \* \* no land shall be acquired with moneys from the migratory bird conservation fund unless the acquisition thereof has been approved by the Governor of the State or appropriate State agency. \* \* \*"

This particular proviso has caused a general slowing down of our program, but we are hopeful that one of several bills now in Congress to revise the present revenue sharing will be passed. This would remove the one big objection to our acquisition program.

Under present law, local counties get 25% of the net refuge revenues from grazing, oil and gas leases issued by the United States Government, and from concessions, and other refuge income.

Our Department has submitted a draft of revised legislation to provide for the payment to the county on a basis of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of 1% of the cost of the land adjusted to current values. We believe the passage of this bill will be a notable milestone in our acquisition program.

We are using condemnation on the acquisition of lands most sparingly and take this method only as a last resort and then only after months and sometimes years of efforts to negotiate.

One of the deterrents we have met in our acquisition program has been the demand of some States for the Bureau to make a commitment for hunting on the proposed refuges. The Bureau is unable to make such a commitment as the Secretary of the Interior has the sole responsibility of determining the extent of any area which will be open to hunting and, of course, we cannot compromise his discretion by conditions attached to the purchase or to a request for State approval.

Those of you who sell hunting and fishing licenses and plan your projects on the basis of returns from license sales can appreciate the position in which we in the Federal Government find ourselves today.

As we expected, last year's duck stamp revenue fell some \$900,000 from 1961. However, 1,134,029 sportsmen in these United States paid \$4,038,087 for duck stamps. This compared with 1,727,534 hunters in 1961 and was practically 1,000,000 less than in 1958 when 2,355,353 bought their migratory bird stamps.

We realize the decline in income will slow down our land-purchase program, but we are realistically trying to set waterfowl seasons that will not deplete the resource further.

We cannot afford to barter ducks to gain duck-stamp dollars!

One means by which land may be acquired and developed for waterfowl management purposes is through so-called Coordination Act transfers. As you know, the Coordination Act provides for the transfer to the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, or to the State game and fish agency, of land acquired by the Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation in connection with water-resource development projects.

The newly developed Choctaw Refuge in Alabama serves as an excellent case history of how a Corps of Engineers' project, originally designed as a navigation project threatening considerable damage to fish and wildlife, was converted to a project of outstanding value to these resources.

This was done in a large part through the efforts of local citizens.

And the end is not yet!

Choctaw Refuge provides an important area which has been established in a large part through the efforts of sportsmen in the vicinity of Jackson, Alabama.

Sportsmen in the vicinity of the Walter F. George Project on the Chattahoochee River between Georgia and Alabama learned of the establishment of the Choctaw Refuge and reasoned that a similar opportunity existed in connection with their project.

A delegation of citizens from Eufala, Alabama, did something about it and when the matter was brought to our attention steps were taken to explore modifications of the Walter F. George Project with the Corps of Engineers. A plan to modify this project to include the Eufala National Wildlife Refuge was also developed.

As a result, the Corps of Engineers developed a modified plan for the project which provides for a 10,775-acre refuge at an additional cost of \$500,000. Our latest advice is that the plan was well received by the Senate Subcommittee on Rivers and Harbors of the Senate Committee on Public Works at its hearing on the proposal on August 29.

Thus does the Federal Government respond when the public makes its voice heard at the local public hearing--the present-day equivalent to the town hall!

If time permitted, I believe I could bring you several enlightening experiences from our contacts in the field.

In one instance, a farmer refused to execute an easement on some of his lands, even though our negotiator called on him at least a dozen times and visited with him many hours. We sent another negotiator to talk to him and he signed the easement pronto. Pressed for his reason, the farmer replied:

"I always liked to talk to Mr. So-and-So but when you entered the picture I decided I could get along all right without you calling on me again."

In another instance a negotiator was literally pressing a county commission to give approval of a project, saying that the landowners themselves wanted to lease and the commissioners could be "right neighborly" if they'd give their consent.

In his truest Scandinavian accent (and I can't approximate it!) the old commissioner said: "Yuh bane want neighborliness--go to next county: they have much better neighbors than us."

My long-time good friend, Nebraska Game and Fish Commissioner Mel Steen, has set an example we'd like other States to emulate. His enthusiasm is so great that a member of his staff has spent two years selecting the suitable wetland areas and this information has all been turned over to us for our use.

We have opened a one-man acquisition office at Grand Island, Nebraska, as of September 4, 1962.

It is heartening to see what can be done to save valuable waterfowl habitat when all people concerned team up to do the job. Without such teamwork and devoted effort at the grass-roots level a large section of the magnificent Lake Erie Marshes near Toledo, Ohio, would recently have been destroyed.

In 1960 one of the duck clubs sold its 461 acres of prime marsh to a fellow who planned to subdivide them into a marina and summer-home development. For years the Fish and Wildlife Service had wanted a national wildlife refuge in this very important waterfowl section of Ohio, but could not proceed because marshes were not available for purchase and, furthermore, as long as they remained in duck club ownership they were not in danger of destruction.

This one sale changed the picture overnight. The very heart of the best marsh area was gone forever unless something were done mighty fast.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources, owner and manager of the adjacent famous McGee Marsh, wanted the wetlands saved. They urged the Fish and Wildlife Service to establish a National Wildlife Refuge there and went all out to get the ball rolling. Local civic organizations, sportsmen's clubs, nature enthusiasts, and outdoor lovers immediately took up the fight to save the marshes. The Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions, which must pass on subdivision proposals, joined the team. The Governor, the two United States Senators and the two Congressmen from Ohio in whose districts the proposed refuge is located actively supported the idea.

On March 15, 1961, the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission approved purchase of the new 5,000-acre Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge and the Bureau is now busy buying the marshes.

Without this sincere effort on everyone's part, the heart of the Lake Erie Marshes would have stopped beating. And so would have the wings of the thousands of waterfowl which annually visit the marsh to nest, feed, play, and raise their families.

Examples such as this show it can be done, but it takes hard work. We can't sit around and just wait for something to happen.

We must make it happen! And, in making this thing happen, all of us have a definite and well-defined part.

We cannot afford to dilly and argue over inconsequential things.

One day the great scientist Faraday, while working in his laboratory, dropped a very small screw on the floor. Nightfall came and his search for it was still unrewarded. A friend remonstrated with him in the words, "You don't really need to find that screw tonight." To which Mr. Faraday replied, "No, but it is very important that I finish what I started out to accomplish."

Mr. Chairman, this is our challenge!

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