

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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PRIVATE LANDOWNERS AND USERS TO GET MORE INFORMATION ON FISH AND WILDLIFE

Useful information concerning fish and wildlife will be more widely available to users of private land and water resources now that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has developed cooperative arrangements with the Federal extension education system, Lynn A. Greenwalt, Director of the Interior Department's agency, said today.

Federal extension education programs, which are administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Extension Service and the Department of Commerce's Office of Sea Grant, and which are conducted by State land and sea grant universities, reach every county in the United States. Traditionally since the first extension program was created in 1914, much of the information disseminated was related to agricultural practices. Because of the resources of the extension system (including more than 15,000 personnel and a vast network of information sources), it has become an important foundation of modern U.S. agriculture, which is unsurpassed in the world. In 1955, the Federal education system for ocean and coastal related topics was expanded with the creation of the Sea Grant Program in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the Department of Commerce.

"Extension education is one of the best means of reaching users of our Nation's land and water resources," Greenwalt said. "And since fish and wildlife are also products of these resources, it is only natural that landowners and land and water users be better informed on how to manage them."

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Under an official agreement between the Interior and Agriculture Departments signed this summer, the Extension Service will be transmitting information from experts in the Fish and Wildlife Service through the State Cooperative Extension Services in the land and sea grant universities in the 50 States, Puerto Rico, Guam, Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia. Similar arrangements will be made with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the Department of Commerce later this year.

The idea is not new, and the Fish and Wildlife Service has been active in working with the Extension Service for more than 40 years. In fact, 22 States currently have extension personnel who specialize in fish and wildlife matters.

"Our inclusion in the extension education system will vastly expand the fish and wildlife expertise available to private citizens who come to their government for advice and the latest research findings. Although the information disseminated is available to anyone, private citizens will benefit most because State and local governments have access to such information through other sources," Greenwalt said.

"Now fish and wildlife subject matter will also be afforded full recognition in the Extension Service."

Greenwalt also announced the creation of an Office of Extension Education and named Jack H. Berryman, 56, to be its chief. Berryman is a long time Service professional who brings Federal, State, and university experience to the position. Prior to his selection for this job, Berryman was Chief of the Service's Division of Technical Assistance. He is a former associate professor at Utah State University and has worked for that State's Fish and Game Department. Berryman is also a past president of the Wildlife Society.