



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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ALASKA GAME REGULATIONS EASE PROBLEMS OF TRANSITION

In the 1959 Alaska game regulations, effective July 1, announced today by the Department of the Interior, Secretary Fred A. Seaton reduced certain mandatory license fees such as those for nonresident hunting.

By trimming these various mandatory fees to \$1 each, the Secretary tacitly approved the action of the Alaska Game Commission which recently exercised its authority to abolish Federal licensing for resident hunting, sport fishing, and trapping.

These combined actions curtail as much as legally possible a double system of licensing in Alaska and will permit the new State to establish realistic fish and wildlife license fees for these activities, to increase its receipts, and to prepare for its coming responsibilities on wildlife management.

Alaska's fish and game resources have been managed by the Federal Government since the area acquired Territorial status. The law creating the State of Alaska provides that the Federal Government continue to manage these resources until Alaska has taken steps to provide for conservation of fish and game which the Secretary can certify to the Congress as being adequate. Congress must have 90 legislative days to consider this determination before the transfer of activity can take place on the following January 1. Secretary Seaton made this certification to Congress on April 27. This means that Alaska will assume management of its fish and wildlife resources January 1, 1960, unless Congress adjourns before the 90 legislative day period expires.

The 1959 regulations prohibit hunting on Kalgin Island in Cook Inlet and at Berners Bay in southeastern Alaska to protect moose herds which have been established in those places. The regulations also prohibit hunting on Adak Island where caribou have recently been established. Conversely, hunting will be allowed in

the Rainbow Reserve near Anchorage where the moose population now warrants harvesting. The special quarter-mile closure along highways on the Kenai Peninsula has been reduced to the standard 100-foot inviolate highway reserve effective elsewhere in Alaska.

In the past the Director of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, has had the authority to close an area to hunting when there was danger of too heavy a harvest. Now the Director has additional authority to adjust seasons to permit more hunting when heavy snows create conditions which portend a heavy winter kill of the game animals.

Protection of cub bear and female bears accompanied by cub (except black bear) has been extended to all of Alaska. This provision was tried on Kodiak Island and found to be of considerable value in protecting bear populations.

Normal adjustments in open season and bag limits are also included in the regulations.

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