

GENESIS OF THE SYMPOSIUM

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We in the Forest Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture are proud of the leading roles our employees have played in creating and arranging this symposium. That it meets a significant need is attested to by the registration of over four hundred specialists from many countries. My role is to explain the origins, objectives, and challenges of this conference.

FOREST SERVICE AS A SPONSOR

Some may think Forest Service sponsorship of a symposium dealing with birds to be unique. A Treaty of the Potomac (River) was signed in 1953 by the Forest Service (U.S. Department of Agriculture), and the Fish and Wildlife Service (U.S. Department of the Interior). This agreement assigned to the Forest Service the primary responsibility for research and management programs on avian habitats in forests and rangelands. The Fish and Wildlife Service was assigned primary responsibility for research on avian biology, ecology, and management. It was agreed that either agency could fill the other's role, if the other was unable to do so, after giving due notice and providing coordination. This is a partnership of long standing to improve the management and knowledge of inter-relationships of wildlife with forest and range habitat.

During the last decade, Federal expenditures for wildlife management and particularly for bird-related programs have increased dramatically. The National Forest System and Bureau of Land Management have greatly expanded their cadres of wildlife biologists. The Endangered Species Act of 1973 caused a dramatic increase in concerns and expenditures particularly for birds listed as threatened and endangered. Yet management of avian habitats and populations in forests and rangelands is still based on woefully inadequate inventories and technical information.

The Forest Service, having a big stake in generating and applying such technology for management, eagerly and fully supported this conference.

OBJECTIVES

The first purpose of this conference was to bring together, for stimulating and fruitful interaction, an international mix of specialists from

divergent disciplines. We wanted them to mingle, not just with their friends and peers, but with specialists in other disciplines as well. I urged participants to be willing to expose for constructive criticism their past studies and their plans for the future.

The second purpose of this conference was to evaluate both the state of knowledge and the state of practice. By state of knowledge, I mean the scientific and technical basis of our understanding. Gaps in this base must be filled by additional research and investigation. By state of practice, I mean how things are being done in actual programs. Obviously, there can be quite a disparity between what we know and what we do. From this conference emerged an appreciation of the status of knowledge and of practice, as well as suggestions for moving available technology into practice.

To fulfill our third purpose for this conference, we hoped that participants would identify what needs to be done to improve the utilization of available knowledge. From this conference came suggestions for training programs relevant to on-the-job needs of practitioners or of scientists. These suggestions cover training courses that would be useful to Federal and State agencies, as well as educators. Suggestions for guidelines, handbooks, manuals, or audio-visual aids are also a part of this effort.

The fourth purpose of this conference was to describe what should be done to fill the gaps in knowledge and methodology. From this conference will come ideas about gaps in the frontiers of knowledge that need to be filled by research. Participants helped us by identifying researchable problems and questions, and suggesting investigative approaches.

BEYOND THIS CONFERENCE

Our purposes could not be achieved by this conference alone. We plan to make this the starting point for a series of ongoing activities. We tried to learn what should follow in the way of technical seminars, training sessions, or whatever else might be needed.

CONCLUSION

I trust that you sense my personal pleasure at having this chance to discuss the Forest Service and its interest in this subject, and about our aspirations for it. Particularly do I appreciate the support that our many co-sponsors have provided. They have been very generous. I especially

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want to thank the authors and those who organized these sessions. All worked very hard before the conference, and they worked even harder before this publication was finished. I challenge you the reader not just to enjoy this

as another proceedings of a conference, but to use the proceedings for work, for planning, and to help to start the activities that will follow beyond this symposium.