

RG 22 FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE, 1890-1956

Reservations

Miscellaneous

General

1947-50

BOX NO. 190

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Washington 25, D. C.

February 26, 1948.

Mr. A. deVos, Biologist,
Department of Lands and Forests,
Port Arthur, Ontario.

Dear Mr. deVos:

Dr. Swanson handed me your letter some time ago suggesting that information on the big-game refuges might be supplied to you from our office. I shall attempt to answer your questions in their order.

At the present time there are 16 big-game refuges with a total of 10,642,015 acres. Three of these, with over 5,000,000 acres, are located in Alaska. Several of these areas, such as the National Bison Range, the National Elk Refuge, the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, and the Sullys Hill National Game Preserve were developed from land holdings which had been either purchased by private agencies or turned over to this Service from some other agency. Consequently, we had very little to say concerning the present boundaries.

The Alaskan areas, as well as several in the Southwest, were selected from the Public Domain and the boundaries did, to a certain extent, follow natural lines. By natural boundaries, in this case, it is meant that they include entire mountain ranges or all of a valley between two ranges. In the case of the mountain sheep areas in the Southwest, the mountains themselves were necessary to insure undisturbed water holes.

Within the past five or six years there has been a decided increase in the amount of lumbering that has been permitted within the national wildlife refuges. This has come about because of two or three reasons. First of all, there has been a growing recognition that timber management is an important tool in wildlife management. In many instances it has been desirable to remove a mature crop of timber in order that food-producing species might be encouraged, which would be readily available for wildlife. During the period of the war stumpage prices increased considerably, justifying the removal of timber from wildlife refuges which were previously unattractive for logging operations. Timber operations have also been conducted on areas to be impounded, where disease was endangering the trees, or where damage had resulted from wind storms. These operations are always supervised by trained biologists; the timber to be removed being marked or indicated by this individual.

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The control of predators on big-game refuges was practiced before the war but during the intervening years it had to be discontinued. Only within the last year or two has this work been resumed. This has provided some surprising results in the apparent increase of young animals. At least the figures at present seem to indicate the desirability of controlling predators, particularly the coyote, where antelope and mountain sheep are concerned. These control activities have been accomplished by trapping, by hunting, by using the "Coyote Getter", and by dropping poisoned bait from airplanes, in particularly rugged country. On some of the western big-game areas over 1,000 coyotes were removed in this manner.

Air patrols, as a law-enforcement measure, were tried on a more extensive basis this year along the Atlantic coast. This activity was particularly successful in apprehending duck hunters who were on otherwise inaccessible stretches of the coastal beach in Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. Air patrol has been used in Alaska for some time and has proved by far the most successful means of covering this immense area. If you care for suggestions on the best types of planes for this work, Mr. John N. Ball of this Service will be glad to send you information from these pilots.

These various answers to your questions may not contain all of the details that you need, so feel perfectly free to write to us for amplification along any of these lines. A copy of Wildlife Leaflet 179 is enclosed which is the directory of national wildlife refuges. It is possible that you already have a copy of this, although it was revised July 1, 1946.

Very truly yours,

Philip A. DuMont,
Biologist,
Division of Wildlife Refuges.

Enclosure.

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FILE COPY
Surname:

Ball

Chief, Branch of Wildlife Refuges

October 24, 1949

Chief, Section of Operations, Branch of Wildlife Refuges

Inspection of Alaska Wildlife Management Areas -
July 29, 1949 to September 6, 1949

ITINERARY

In accordance with Letter of Travel Instructions dated July 21, 1949, the writer in company with Emmett P. Haddon departed from Washington, D. C. in Grumman Widgeon N 728 at 7:25 AM, EST. on July 29, 1949. A gas stop was made at Goshen, Indiana. A second stop was made at LaCrosse, Wisconsin, where the plane was met by Ray Steele and Roy Ferguson, and twelve Refuge boundary marker signs were loaded aboard for delivery to Alaska. After a brief conference with Messrs. Steele and Ferguson we took off from LaCrosse at 5:15 PM, CST. and arrived at Mitchell, S.D. at 8:30 PM, CST.

July 30, 1949, we departed from Mitchell, S.D. at 11:40 AM, CST. refueled at Lewistown, Montana and arrived at Great Falls, Montana at 5:55 PM, MST. where we remained overnight.

July 31, 1949, we departed Great Falls, Montana at 7:30 AM, MST. and arrived at Edmonton, Alberta, Canada at 11:20 AM, MST. Refueled, cleared Canadian customs and arrived at Fort Nelson, British Columbia, Canada at 6:55 PM, MST. where we remained overnight.

August 1, 1949, departed from Fort Nelson at 7:30 AM, MST. Refueled at Whitehorse, Yukon Territory and arrived at Juneau, Alaska at 2:40 PM, PST.

August 2, 1949, was spent at Juneau in conference with Regional Director Rhode and other members of the Regional office staff. An inspection was made of the Army Support and other facilities of the Service at Juneau in company with Administration Officer Furness.

August 3, 1949, after further conference with Regional office personnel I departed from Juneau at 4:25 PM, PST. in Grumman Widgeon N 728 accompanied by Messrs. Emmett P. Haddon and W. A. Elkins, Regional Wildlife Supervisor, arriving at Anchorage, Alaska at 7:45 PM, AST.

August 4, 1949, was spent in Anchorage conferring with personnel of the Anchorage office and inspecting the Lake Hood hangar construction project. Regional Director Rhode, Aircraft Supervisor Smith and the writer discussed plans for the hangar on the site.

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August 5, 1949, was devoted to further conferences with Fish and Wildlife personnel of the Anchorage office. The lake food banger project was discussed with Mr. Chris Lempie, in charge of the Alaskan International Airport development program for the GMA. Discussions were also held with Gen. Twining and Col. Larsen in regard to cooperative relationships between the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Military Incident to Wildlife management work. Military clearances were obtained for the impending Alutian flight through Col. Larsen and Maj. Riordan. At 5:50 PM. Messrs. Haddon, Elkins and the writer departed Anchorage in N 728 arriving at Kodiak at 8:20 PM. We were met at the Naval Station by Agent Lindsley and transported to the town of Kodiak.

August 6, 1949, conference with Refuge Manager Beals, after which a field inspection trip was made with Beals in Government Jeep from Kodiak at Ohtinak Point. En route two fishery violations involving fishing too close to the mouth of a stream were observed and parties concerned were instructed to report to the Enforcement Officer at Kodiak. Necessary information was filed incident to prosecuting the violations.

August 7, 1949. After discussions with Mr. Beals, Messrs. Haddon, Elkins, Beals and the writer departed Kodiak on the new Refuge patrol vessel, Shearwater II, on its maiden voyage. A patrol was run to Whale Island where Haddon and Elkins went ashore for the purpose of photographing the Kittiwake colony. Further patrol was made to Afognak Bay where we anchored for the night.

August 8, 1949. Patrol was made on Shearwater II from Afognak Bay into the Raspberry Straits area. A herd of 70 elk was observed on the side of a hill above the timber line. Messrs. Haddon, Elkins and the writer put ashore to obtain pictures of the elk herd. Only a long telephoto shot was obtained. We returned to Shearwater II and arrived in Kodiak at 6:30 PM.

August 9, 1949, after conferences with Mr. Beals, departed from Kodiak Naval Air Station in Grumman Wildgeon N 728 at 6:15 PM. In company with Messrs. Haddon and Elkins. A flight was made around the east and south end of the Island. Six hundred reindeer were counted in the Olga Bay area. A landing was made on Karluk Lake, Kodiak Island, adjacent to the Fisheries Weir Station, at 8:10 PM. Discussions were held with Fisheries Biologist Shuman and other Fisheries personnel at the Station.

August 10, 1949. Departed Karluk Lake at 11:20 AM. after Haddon completed photographing the Weir Station operations. A landing was made on Red Lake at noon after taking aerial pictures

of bear along one of the streams feeding into Fraser Lake. Ten bear were observed in this area. An attempt was made to obtain ground pictures of bear along a stream feeding into the North side of Red Lake. Heavy bear activity was apparent but none were observed, probably due to the unfavorable wind direction. Photographs were obtained of a very heavy salmon run up the stream. We departed Red Lake, Kodiak Island at 4:00 PM. and arrived at Port Heidon at 5:40 PM. No fuel was available at Port Heidon.

August 11, 1949. Departed Port Heidon in aircraft N 728 with Messrs. Haddon and Elkins at 9:10 AM. and back-tracked to Naknek for fuel, arriving there at 10:25 AM. Brief discussions were held with Fish and Wildlife personnel at Naknek. Departure was made at 2:00 PM. and arrived Cold Bay at 6:10 PM.

August 12, 1949. Delayed Cold Bay on account of weather until 2:55 PM. at which time we departed for Umnak, arriving there at 5:30 PM.

August 13, 1949. Clearances from Adak Air Forces Base to proceed from Umnak to Adak was delayed and then the weather turned bad at Umnak so that it was necessary to remain over. The time was spent in reconnaissance of Umnak by car insofar as the limited road system would permit and in conferences with the Conservation Officer, Lt. Moses.

August 14, 1949. We departed Umnak at 9:00 AM. and arrived Adak at 2:05 PM. Weather conditions at Amchitka would not permit proceeding further.

August 15, 1949. Held at Adak due to Amchitka weather. Contact was made with the Base Conservation Officer, 1st Lt. L. D. Harding, who was also Provost Marshall. Lt. Harding took us on a reconnaissance trip of the Island to the extent of the available road system. Lt. Col. F. J. Hoermann, Aleutian Group Commander was contacted as was Maj. Hinchliff, Operations Officer. Adak Island has a serious rat problem and it is recommended that the Service provide assistance to the Military establishment in cleaning out this pest. The present wildlife on the Island consist of Ptarmigan and Fox.

August 16, 1949. Forced to hold at Adak because of unfavorable Amchitka weather. Further discussions were held with Military personnel and with the Conservation Officer.

August 17, 1949. Departed Adak at 10:00 AM. and arrived Amchitka 12:30 PM. Met Refuge Manager Jones and Commanding Officer Capt. F. A. Puckett. A reconnaissance was made of the Constantine Harbor area by Jeep through the courtesy of Capt. Puckett, and approximately 20 sea otter were observed.

August 18 and 19, 1949. On Amchitka performing ground reconnaissance as weather conditions would not permit flights.

August 20, 1949. Performed aerial census of the sea otter around Amchitka and Rat Islands. Weather clear and visibility unlimited from 10:30 AM. to approximately 6:00 PM.

August 21, 1949. Departed Amchitka in Grumman Widgeon N 728 at 12:25 PM. accompanied by Messrs. Haddon, Elkins and Jones. Refueled at Adak and arrived at Unmak at 6:25 PM. where we remained overnight.

August 22, 1949. Departed Unmak at 9:50 AM. arriving at Cold Bay at 11:50 AM. The remainder of the day was spent on ground reconnaissance with jeep in the Cold Bay area with Messrs. Jones and Haddon.

August 23, 1949. The morning of August 23 was spent in conference with Elkins and Jones on Cold Bay operations. A brief discussion was held with Maj. Deane, Commanding Officer of the Thornborough Air Forces Base relative to Wildlife matters in the Cold Bay area. Mr. Haddon received a wire from the Washington office requiring him to meet Director Day in Anchorage September 18 so it was decided that Mr. Elkins and the writer would continue on schedule and leave Mr. Haddon with Refuge Manager Jones to complete his bear pictures. Departed Cold Bay 4:55 PM., arriving Naknek at 7:45 PM.

August 24, 1949. Departed Naknek 11:30 AM., arriving Anchorage at 2:15 PM. En route to Anchorage we circumnavigated Augustine Island in Cook Inlet and counted six sea otter, verifying previous reports of otter in this location. The remainder of the day was spent in discussions with Fish and Wildlife Service personnel at Anchorage.

August 25, 1949. Conferences were held in the Anchorage office with Aircraft Supervisor Smith in regard to hangar construction problems; with Messrs. Elkins and Spencer relative to Kenai operating problems; with Chris Lemple of the GAA in regard to the Lake Hood and International Airport development program; and with Messrs. Elkins, Spencer, Robinson and Tyler, the latter two representing the Bureau of Land Management, Fire Control Branch, in regard to Kenai fire control and economic use permits.

August 26, 1949. Mr. Elkins departed via commercial air-line for Juneau. Further conferences were held with Aircraft Supervisor Smith and Alaska Railroad Engineer Cook in regard to the Lake Hood hangar construction program. Smith and the writer contacted Lt. Col. Larsen, Aide to Gen. Twining, in regard to wildlife problems in the Aleutian area and Col. Balkin of the Tenth Air-Sea Rescue Squadron, on the hangar construction program at Lake Hood. At 5:35 PM. the writer and Kenai Refuge Manager Spencer departed Anchorage in Government aircraft N 728 and NC 701 respectively for Kenai. The writer was accompanied by Alaska Game Commissioner Garnet Martin and Mr. Spencer was accompanied by Lloyd W. Swift, Chief, Division of Wildlife Management from the Washington Office of the Forest Service. After a short aerial reconnaissance of the Kenai Moose Range we arrived Kenai at 6:45 PM. The evening was spent in discussions with Messrs. Spencer, Martin, Swift, Peterson, Chateleine and Game Agent Bill Allen.

August 27, 1949. In company with Commissioner Martin and Mr. Chateleine of the Branch of Federal Aid in N 728 and Messrs. Spencer and Swift in NC 701, departed Kenai at 11:55 AM. for a reconnaissance flight over the Moose Range. Landings were made at Kasilof to examine the browse on the Moose wintering grounds and on Kenai Lake to call on Alaska Game Commissioner Simons who was found not to be at home. Returned to Kenai at 3:10 PM. Conference with Spencer on Kenai Refuge matters. Departed Kenai in N 728 with Commissioner Martin and Mr. Swift at 6:00 PM. arriving Anchorage at 6:40 PM.

August 28, 1949. At Anchorage. In company with Game Agent Holger Larsen met Mr. Tommy Bronson and Col. Stewart at the Anchorage Airport at Ft. Richardson. Remainder of the day was spent with Messrs. Larsen, Bronson and Col. Stewart. Refuge Manager Spencer joined the party later in the day.

August 29, 1949. At Anchorage. Conferences with Regional Aircraft Supervisor Smith in regard to hangar construction at Lake Hood. Conferences with Game Agent Larsen, Alaska Game Commissioners Martin and Simons, Refuge Manager Spencer, Tommy Bronson and Col. Stewart relative to wildlife needs in Alaska. Conference with Spencer and Mr. F. W. Meek of the Land Planning Branch of the Bureau of Land Management, Regional office staff in regard to the Kenai Moose Range cabin site permits.

August 30, 1949. Discussions with Game Agent Larsen, Tommy Bronson, Col. Stewart, Spencer and Aircraft Supervisor Smith. Departed Anchorage in Grumman Widgeon N 728 at 12:45 PM., refueled at Yakutat and proceeded on toward Juneau. The radio equipment went out opposite Cape Fairweather so returned to Yakutat at 8:10 PM. Yakutat time.

August 31, 1949. Replaced radio fuses and departed Yakutat at 11:25 AM, arriving Juneau at 4:20 PM, PST. Fog conditions encountered in Icy Straits required landing on the water and taxiing approximately twenty miles, consuming two hours and seventeen minutes before weather conditions were suitable for continuing aerial operations into Juneau.

September 1, 1949. At Juneau. Conferences with Regional Office personnel.

September 2, 1949. Brief conference with Wildlife Management Supervisor Elkins. Departed Juneau 1:00 PM, PST, in Government aircraft N 728. Refueled and cleared Canadian Customs at Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, arriving Fort Nelson, British Columbia at 7:25 PM, PST.

September 3, 1949. Departed Fort Nelson 7:25 AM, PST. Refueled and cleared Canadian Customs at Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Refueled and cleared U. S. Customs at Great Falls, Montana. Arrived Miles City, Montana at 8:45 PM, MST.

September 4, 1949. Departed Miles City, Montana at 7:15 AM, MST, arriving at Mitchell, S.D. at 12:00 noon CST.

September 5, 1949. At Mitchell, S.D.

September 6, 1949. Departed Mitchell, S.D. 7:45 AM, CST. Refueled at Joliet, Illinois. Arrived Washington, D.C. at 7:00 PM, EST.

KODIAK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

PERSONNEL:

The personnel of the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge presently consists of Refuge Manager P-3 Frank L. Beals. Arrangements have been made to divide the time and expenses of a Clerk-Stenographer between the Refuge Branch and the Fisheries Management Agent Roy Lindsley. This arrangement should prove satisfactory for the immediate future since the two offices have now been combined into one office building adjacent to the Fisheries Agent's residence and approximately two blocks from Mr. Beals' residence.

There is immediate and urgent need for the establishment and filling of a Refuge Maintenance Man (boatman) position to assist Beals in the operation of the recently acquired vessel, Shearwater II,

and to assist with Refuge patrol, equipment maintenance and Wildlife management work as assigned. This position, in order to be comparable with similarly classified Refuge jobs, should be in the GPC-6 grade. The incumbent of the position should be a first-class boatman, fully qualified or with sufficient background to qualify under Beals' direction for the operation of the Shearwater II in Kodiak waters. This boat cannot be safely operated without a minimum crew of two. The position should be filled just as soon as a suitable incumbent can be found.

Mr. Elkins has approached Mr. Raymond Brauser to determine his interest in the position. Mr. Brauser has just graduated from Wildlife Management School and is completing his second summer's work at the Kariuk Lake Weir Station. Mr. Brauser has had some small-boat experience, appears energetic and aggressive. He should team up well with Beals and has possibilities for future development as our Alaskan Refuge operations expand. Mr. Brauser showed an interest in considering the position but was not ready to state that he would accept such an appointment if offered until he had an opportunity to give the matter further consideration.

It is not felt that Beals has shown the initiative and energy that might be expected in performing the requirements of the Refuge Manager P-3 position to date. His past performance has been handicapped due to lack of proper equipment that would enable him to carry on the patrol work and gather the wildlife information required. Now that he has this equipment in the form of a jeep and an adequate vessel, he will be expected to fulfill the complete requirements of the position. This was called to Beals' attention at the time of our inspection and should be followed up by the Regional Office through careful observation of his performance. Beals has many good qualities of value to the Service, but he has been without supervision and equipment for so long that it has been difficult to get him out of the stagnation into which he had lapsed. Beals has been tardy in submitting adequate and required reports and has not been in the habit of spending sufficient time in the field to obtain first-hand knowledge of wildlife populations and problems of his area. He has assured us that we may expect better performance now that he has available suitable equipment with which to work.

It is felt that during the next 6 to 12 months Beals' performance should be kept under careful scrutiny of the Regional Office and that Beals should be given every opportunity to demonstrate his ability to handle the job. In order to more adequately judge Beals' performance it is suggested the Regional Office provide him with an outline of work, setting forth the problems on which he will be expected to devote his time and on which results of progress may be measured. It is further suggested the Regional Office provide us with a report and recommendations in regard to Beals at the end of the current fiscal year.

BUILDING FACILITIES:

The building facilities available for the Kodiak Refuge include a three-bedroom residence, a temporary garage, office space in the Fisheries office building adjacent to the Fisheries Agent's residence, concrete vault storage space and a frame warehouse at Spruce Cape Military Camp. Spruce Cape camp has been formally turned over to the Fish and Wildlife Service and a large number of Pacific and quonset huts are available for salvage and use elsewhere.

In addition to the above facilities the Branch of Alaska Fisheries has a small dock and warehouse where Fish and Wildlife Service vessels, including the Shearwater II, may tie up. The location of this facility is satisfactory and very convenient. The facilities, however, are in rather poor condition and require rehabilitation. It is suggested plans be prepared and submitted with estimated cost data for rehabilitating this dock and warehouse facility so that consideration may be given to providing the necessary funds to do the job. If a specific appropriation cannot be obtained for the work, possibly such funds may be provided through sharing the cost among the using Branches which include Wildlife Refuges, Alaska Fisheries, and Game Management.

Since my previous inspection the office has been moved from the Refuge Manager's residence to the Fish and Wildlife Service office building located approximately two blocks nearer the center of town adjacent to the Fisheries Agent's residence. There is adequate room in this building and it is advantageous to have the two offices of the Fish and Wildlife Service consolidated under one roof. As a result of this consolidation it is possible for the Fisheries Agent and the Refuge Manager to share the same Clerk-Stenographer. Beals desires to use the room in his residence formerly occupied as an official office. His quarters deductions should be modified accordingly to provide for this use.

It is suggested a concrete floor be placed in the basement of the residence and concrete or masonry block walls be provided. It is also suggested that steel or masonry support columns be substituted for the present wood pillars in the basement. This modification is of low priority and should be given consideration when and as funds become available. Other facilities appear to be adequate to meet the immediate requirements. It should be possible for the Refuge Maintenance Man (boatman) to provide his own quarters in the town of Kodiak, thus eliminating the necessity for additional Government quarters. A flag pole should be provided for the Refuge Manager's residence and a flag displayed in accordance with paragraph 1734 of the Administration Manual.

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The residence building was found to be in its usual neat and orderly condition and in a good state of repair. When this building is repainted outside it should conform with the Refuge color scheme as outlined in paragraph 6418 of the Refuge Manual.

EQUIPMENT:

The major equipment available to the Refuge Manager consists of one Government pickup truck; one standard four-wheel-drive jeep; one stake-body truck obtained from Navy Supply and in poor but operatable condition; one dump truck also obtained from Navy Surplus and in poor but operatable condition and available for use by Refuge or Fisheries as required; and one 38 ft. vessell, Shearwater II, powered with 115 HP Diesel engine and equipped with four bunks, galley, head, cargo hold, tender and 5 HP outboard motor.

The pick-up truck is in poor condition and uneconomical of maintenance and operation. It should be replaced during the current fiscal year with a four-wheel-drive jeep pickup truck with oversize 650x16 tires.

The standard jeep is in good condition and is a very desirable piece of equipment for patrol work. This jeep should be painted standard Refuge colors in accordance with paragraph 7234 of the Refuge Manual which calls for the painting of cars and trucks rich green enamel Spec. ES-No. 39-E-100 or matching shade. This color is in affect a forest green. The jeep should be marked on either door with the standard Government shield decal in accordance with paragraph 4513 of the Administration Manual and should be equipped with Government tags.

The above comments in regard to the marking of the Kodiak jeep applies to all Refuge automotive equipment since none were observed to be marked as required under paragraph 4513 of the Administrative Manual.

The trucks are in poor condition but will serve the immediate needs for limited hauling. Consideration should be given to replacing these trucks with one combination stake and dump truck in Fiscal Year 1951 or if funds will permit, later this fiscal year. In the meantime only a sufficient amount should be spent on these old surplus trucks to keep them in safe operating condition.

The Shearwater II with its auxiliary tender and outboard motor are all in new and excellent condition. A two-day trip was made in this vessel as a shake-down cruise by Messrs. Beals, Haddon, Elkins and Ball. This type of vessel seems well adapted for operation

in Kodiak waters. Some difficulty was encountered through fumes from the stove being sucked back into the cabin when cooking while the vessel was under way. The cause of this difficulty should be determined and corrected in order to prevent possible monoxide poisoning. The Shearwater II should be provided with the U. S. Ensign and Fish and Wildlife Service pennants and flags which should be flown at all times when the vessel is under way in accordance with appropriate regulations for their use. The U. S. Ensign may be procured from the Bureau of Federal Supply stock catalog, Classification 5, and Fish and Wildlife Service pennants and flags may be ordered through this office.

MARKING AND POSTING:

There is still not a single sign on the Island of Kodiak to indicate that it is a Wildlife Refuge under the administration of the Fish and Wildlife Service. The marking and posting of this area presents a problem somewhat different from that normally encountered because of its size and lack of specific points of access. As mentioned in my previous report, however, recognition and informational signs should be erected at strategic points. The proper location of these signs and markers should be carefully studied by the Refuge Manager to assure their location at all normal points of ingress and egress. A large rustic sign should be erected at the office in the town of Kodiak designating it as the headquarters of the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge. Such a sign might well be constructed in the Forest Service Shops where arrangements have been made by the Regional Office to have other recognition and informational signs constructed.

The enamel Blue Goose signs are not particularly appropriate for Kodiak or Kenai and because of the large number of signs required for marking these two areas, it is suggested that a similar shield be used substituting a Big Brown Bear for the Goose and designating the area as "National Wildlife Management Area" in lieu of "National Wildlife Refuge."

WILDLIFE PROGRAM:

During the past year Beals has made little progress in obtaining information on the bear population of the Island; on the size of the reindeer herd, or carrying out the sea otter count along the Aleutian in cooperation with the Navy. Now that suitable automotive and vessel transportation facilities, plus the privilege of chartering Service aircraft when required, are available to Beals we will expect him to spend sufficient time in the field to obtain more adequate first-hand information on bear populations; the

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bear-salmon relationship; bear-cattle relationship; and the reindeer population and condition of the range. These problems require a continuing study and it is suggested that a procedure be established for annual transect counts of bear to determine population trends. These problems should all receive careful study and should be covered by adequate progress reports and recommendations for management. Beals has been weak in getting his observations and findings on paper. He should be encouraged to make his observations a matter of record and to include recommendations for management and administration as occasion warrants. During the course of his service Beals has acquired some very valuable data but it has rarely been made available through the submission of proper reports.

As previously mentioned it is strongly recommended that the Regional Office set up a work program to serve as a guide line for Beals for the remainder of the year. Beals has demonstrated ability as a photographer and should be encouraged to include more photographs in his narrative and other reports.

WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS:

Incident to our patrol trip with Shearwater II in Raspberry Straits, a herd of 70 elk were observed approximately two-thirds of the way up the side of a mountain on Afognak Island. These animals were above the timber line in a lush stand of grass and were feeding at the time of observation. The vessel was anchored and Messrs. Haddon, Elkins and the writer went ashore for the purpose of obtaining some pictures of the animals, if at all possible. Travel through the Spruce timber was relatively easy. Signs of elk were observed all through the woodland. Above the timber line was a lush stand of a red-top grass approximately waist high. Upon reaching the edge of the timber the elk were observed still feeding but rapidly working their way around the side of the hill. They were approximately 1000 feet above us. We endeavored to get closer but found the going extremely difficult due to extensive alder thickets. After about two hours of climbing we reached the level where the elk had been, but by this time they had disappeared from sight over the top of the mountain and time would not permit our following them longer. Bear trails were observed along the hillside and through the alder thickets but no animals were seen.

Estimates of the number of elk on Afognak Island have been placed at 200 and a short open season was proposed for this fall. Judging from the difficulties of travel on foot on Afognak Island it is doubtful that a short open season would result in the killing of many elk. There was no evidence of serious over-browsing in the area we observed.

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After departing from Kodiak a flight was made down along the southeast side of the Island across to Olga Bay. A total of 600 reindeer were observed in the area northwest of Olga Bay between Olga Bay and Cape Ikolik. A flight was made along the stream which enters the southeast end of Karluk Lake and a tributary stream from southeast of Karluk Lake to Olga Bay along which a total of ten bear were observed. A landing was made in Red Lake and a foot trip made up the tributary stream entering the north side of Red Lake in the hope of obtaining bear pictures. Signs of extensive bear activities were observed along both sides of the stream and there were numerous trails leading up the adjoining hill sides. Apparently this stream enjoys a heavy concentration of bear but none were actually observed, probably due primarily to the fact that it was necessary for us to work down wind so that the animals moved out well ahead of us. A heavy run of salmon was just entering the stream from the lake so that it was bank full of fish for one-quarter to a half mile up stream from the outlet into the lake. The remains of salmon consumed by the bear were observed along either bank of the stream.

According to observations of Fishery Biologist Shuman and other members of the Karluk Weir Station party, bear are not nearly as prevalent in the Karluk Lake area as during the previous year.

ALUTIAN ISLANDS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

GENERAL:

The period August 11 through August 22 was spent on route to and in the Aleutian Islands from Naknek. The flight down the peninsula from Naknek did not reveal the usual number of Caribou. It is estimated the total number of animals seen would not exceed 100. This is considerably below the numbers observed on previous trips. This may be due to the fact that the animals were farther away from the coast at this time of year than the route traveled. Previous observations had been made in May and October.

Landings were made on Unnak and Adak Islands in addition to Amchitka. Time was spent with 1st Lt. Moses, Conservation Officer on Unnak, discussing game conditions. The Military were under the impression that Unnak Island was a part of the Aleutian Island Refuge and no hunting had been permitted there. Lt. Moses was advised that the Island was excluded from the Refuge and that hunting was permissible in accordance with Alaskan Game Regulations. Mr. Elkins prepared a memo to the Base Commander confirming this. Hunting on the Island of Unnak would include Ptarmigan and occasional waterfowl.

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Provost Marshall 1st Lt. L. D. Harding was the designated Conservation Officer for the Island of Adak and considerable time was spent with him. Lt. Harding drove us on an inspection tour which included practically all of the passable roads. Wildlife on the Island of Adak consists primarily of Ptarmigan, Fox, and an occasional waterfowl. The present outdoor recreation indulged in by the Military is fishing. Clamming and shrimping are reported as excellent. Adak has a serious rat problem on which this Service should provide the necessary guidance to the Military to alleviate. No evidence of Wildlife abuse was noted at either Unalakleet or Adak.

SEA OTTER:

We arrived on the Island of Amchitka about noon of August 17. Mr. Jones was there waiting for us. Base Commander F. A. Puckett provided us with a jeep for transportation during our stay on the Island. In company with Mr. Elmer Hanson, civilian employee of the Air Forces, who has been on the Island since 1945 and who is deeply interested in the sea otter studies, a trip was made to Constantine Harbor and the docks area. Approximately 20 sea otter were observed in this area and two were observed in among the docks. They showed no concern over our presence other than curiosity.

August 18 and 19 were spent in ground reconnaissance in the Makarius Bay, Loran and Radar Stations areas. Sea Otter were observed to be fairly evenly distributed throughout these areas. Many were with young of the season. Harbor seal were observed in the same area with the sea otter but could be readily distinguished from them by their general appearance and manner of swimming.

An aerial census of the sea otter around Amchitka and Rat Islands was made on August 20. W. A. Elkins acted as observer on the right side of the aircraft and Robert D. Jones, Jr., observed from the left side. Mr. Elmer Hanson participated as an observer on the second south side run. Weather was clear and visibility unlimited with a wind of approximately 20 miles per hour velocity. The flight proceeded from East Cape along the north side of the Island into the wind at an altitude of 50 to 150 feet and at an indicated air speed of 80 to 85 miles per hour which provided a ground speed of 60 to 65 miles per hour while traveling into the wind. From the west end of Amchitka Island we proceeded to Rat Island, circumnavigated it, returned to Amchitka and proceeded down wind along the south side of the Island to our point of beginning. The down wind trip flying at the same indicated air speed gave us a ground speed of approximately 100 to 105 miles per hour. We were not satisfied with the count on the south side of the Island and a second run was made from East Cape westward to

the west end of the Island into the wind. The second run, because of the reduced speed and better light conditions, provided a much more satisfactory count. A total of 1321 sea otter were actually counted. Of this number only 234 were around Rat Island. The remainder being around Amchitka. It was found that the best altitude for observation was approximately 100 feet. All of the otter observed were within the first mile and a half of shore and the majority were within the first half mile. The sea otter did not appear frightened at the sight of the low-flying aircraft. Some exhibited curiosity and a few would dive as the aircraft passed over them. If the aircraft circled and passed over them a second or third time, more of the animals would dive. The otter were observed almost exclusively in kelp beds. Observation conditions were ideal yet at times under certain light conditions and in heavy kelp the otter were difficult and sometimes impossible to observe. We have no satisfactory check from which we could determine the percentage of otter observed but believe for Amchitka it would approximate 75%. This figure is simply a guess. The number observed around Rat Island did not live up to previous reports of concentration in that area and it is possible that our percentage of observations might be somewhat lower for that Island. As an example of how readily the otter may be passed over we might consider the results from the two runs along the south side of Amchitka. On the first run down wind from west to east at a ground speed of approximately 105 miles per hour and approximately one-quarter mile off shore, 314 otter were counted. On the second run into the wind from east to west at a ground speed of approximately 65 miles per hour and approximately one-half mile from shore a total of 559 otter were counted. In addition to the slower speed on the east-west flight, light conditions were somewhat better for observation purposes and we were in better position in relation to the kelp beds. Seal were noted throughout the flight but there was no difficulty in distinguishing the sea otter from the seal. Concentrations of sea lion were observed around East Cape and on the small rock islets on the southwest side of the Island.

The Grumman-Widgeon is considered well adapted to sea otter census work because of its relatively slow speed of 80 miles per hour, its good visibility, and the safety feature of the boat hull.

A complete report covering the sea otter census operations is to be submitted by Jones.

PROPOSED SEA OTTER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM:

A management program for the sea otter was discussed at length with Messrs. Jones, Elkins, and Elmer Hanson. The proposal for an experimental harvest of approximately 100 animals per year