LDIR#005
BOUNTY SYSTEM

PREDATOR AND RODENT CONTROL POLICY OF THE U. S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Authorization for Control Work

The Fish and Wildlife Service is the Federal agency authorized and instructed to carry on predator and rodent control activities. This authority is stated in the Act of March 2, 1931 (46 Stat. 1468), which specifies that the Secretary is "authorized and directed to conduct such investigations, experiments and tests as he may deem necessary in order to determine, demonstrate and promulgate the best methods of eradication, suppression or bringing under control on national forests or other areas of the public domain as well as on State, Territory, or privately-owned lands of mountain lions, wolves, coyotes, bobcats, prairie dogs, gophers, ground squirrels, jack rabbits, and other animals injurious to agriculture, horticulture, forestry, animal husbandry, wild game animals, fur-bearing animals, and birds, and for the protection of stock and other domestic animals through the suppression of rabies and tularemia in predatory or other wild animals; and to conduct campaigns for the destruction or control of such animals."

Under this legislation, as well as that contained in the Act of August 14, 1946 (60 Stat. 1080), and in the Annual Appropriation Acts since establishment of the work in 1916, the Department of the Interior, through the Fish and Wildlife Service, is authorized to provide assistance to and cooperate with States, public and private organizations, and individuals in the control of predatory animals and rodents injurious to agriculture, horticulture, forests, animal husbandry and wild game.

General Policy

The primary function of the Fish and Wildlife Service is to conserve and manage the Nation's fish and wildlife resources for the use and enjoyment of all. A part of this function is the management of animal populations so as to decrease the amount of damage done to agriculture, forestry, game and related activities. In fulfillment of this responsibility, the predator and rodent control activities conducted by the Service in accordance with Congressional authorizations shall be carried out in such a manner as to entail the least possible interference with the native animal and plant life.

The application of approved practices to prevent damage by wild animals is a prerogative exercised by the owner, occupant, or administrator of the land involved, except as such actions may be modified by State or local law. His cooperation is a prerequisite to the conduct of control operations on his land. In carrying out such activities, the Service shall provide assistance in the application of measures it has found to be most practicable.

A REPORT TO THE
GAME, FISH AND PARKS COMMISSION
ON THE BOUNTY SYSTEM

This report was prepared to provide the people of South Dakota with a summary of what is known about bounty systems, our system in particular, and bounty systems in general. The last section of the report contains several recommendations concerning our bounty system and predator control.

The bounty systems considered are those dealing with mammalian predators. Bounties on birds and reptiles are excluded. Throughout the report the term "control" is used frequently. This word is used to mean a process by which a predator population is held and maintained at a lower level than would occur naturally. Complete or even substantial control is not implied. The slightest noticeable reduction from a natural population level is considered to be control.

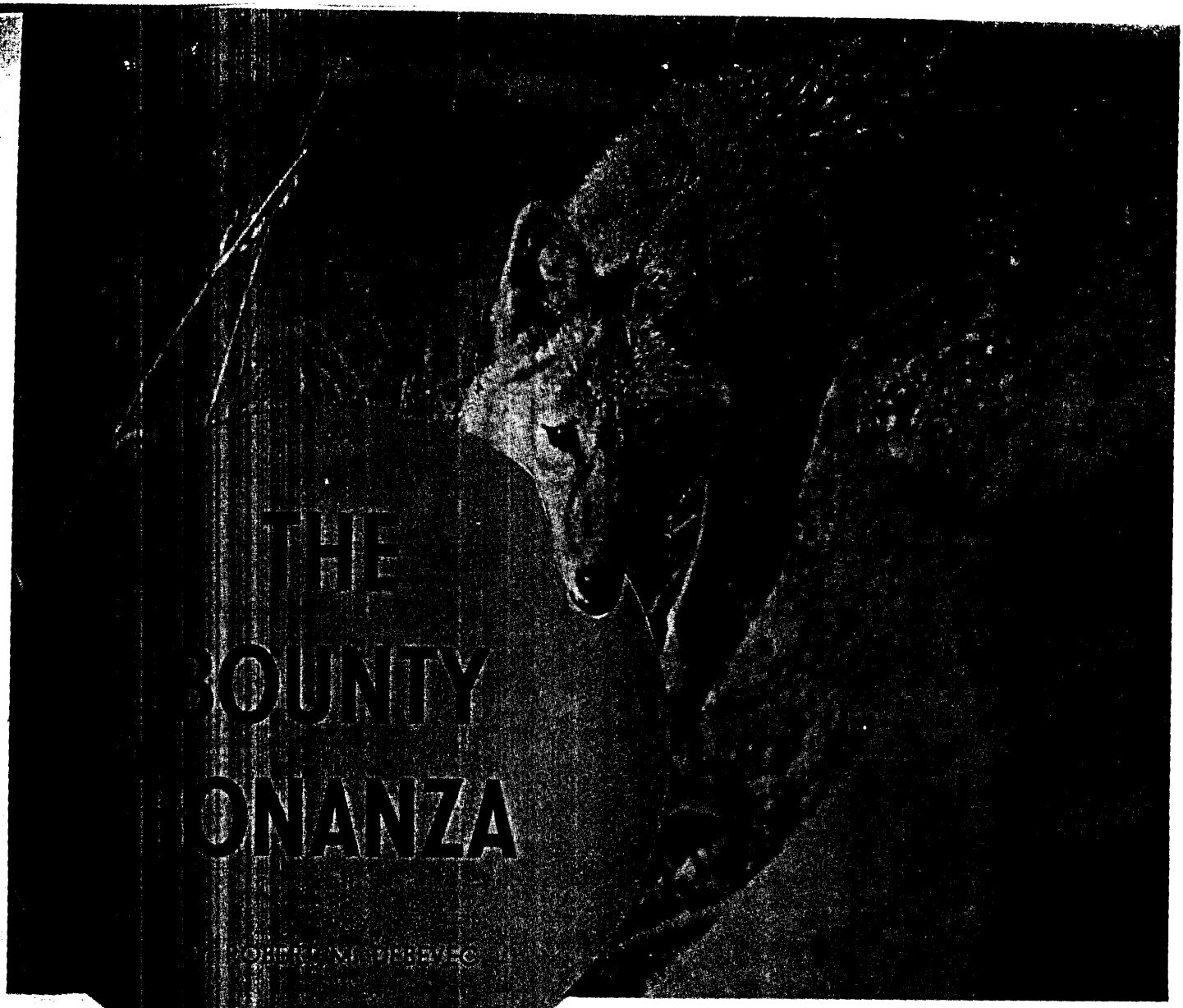
The report covers the following topics:

Introductory Statement
The Bounty System and Predator Control
Bounties Do Not Control Predators
Why Bounties Do Not Control Predators
Predator Control and Game Abundance
Bounties vs. Livestock and Poultry Losses
Bounties vs. Disease
Fraud and the Bounty System
The Cost of Bounties
Methods of Financing Bounties
Bounties in Neighboring States
Proposed Raccoon Bounty
Bounties and Public Relations
A Practical Method of Predator and Nuisance Mammal Control
Cooperative Predator Control Program
An Approach to the Problem
Recommendations

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

One of the oldest, outmoded, expensive and misunderstood so-called wildlife practices in the United States is the bounty system for controlling predators. Expenditures for such practices have been astronomical and have been almost completely ineffective. Today the files of many game and fish departments are loaded with data proving conclusively the inadequacy of the bounty system in controlling predator populations.

In reading this report it is important to recognize there are two basic arguments against the bounty system. They are:



THE BOUNTY BONANZA

ROBERT M. PERSHES

REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM
SPORTS AFIELD JULY 1959

Against all opposition, the bounty system rolls merrily onward. Check this listing to see what "predators" your state will buy

IN ALASKA RECENTLY an aerial bounty hunter collected over $15,000 in wolf and coyote bounties in one year, and by applying himself diligently to the task (this is work?) manages to average $8,000 annually with his airborne shotgun.

In a typical month during the fall of 1958, almost $9,000 was paid out in bounties on badger, fox, bobcat and coyote in South Dakota.

Michigan doles out $175,000 in bounties every year.

Although nearly $2,000,000 is spent annually in bounty payments by the 31 states that still use this system, professional conservationists and game biologists are almost 100 per cent in agreement that it is a pure waste of money as far as attaining its objective: the control of predators.

Some examples frequently cited by these men are: PENNSYLVANIA where a weasel bounty was paid for half a century. At the end of that period they were paying more weasels per year than at any time during the preceding 50 years.

MINNESOTA where foxes bountied have risen from 25,000 each year to 40,000 a year over the past 12 years, indicating a steady rise in fox population with no signs of a decline.

NORTH DAKOTA, southwest of the Missouri River, where the red fox, once a rare citizen, has become common, all under the bounty system.

IOWA where $150,000 is being poured down the bounty rathole each year according to Glen Sanderson, game biologist, "without exerting any control on the various species of animals killed."

Besides not doing the job for which they were designed, bounty laws are ineffective for the reason that they are filled with contradictions in many states.

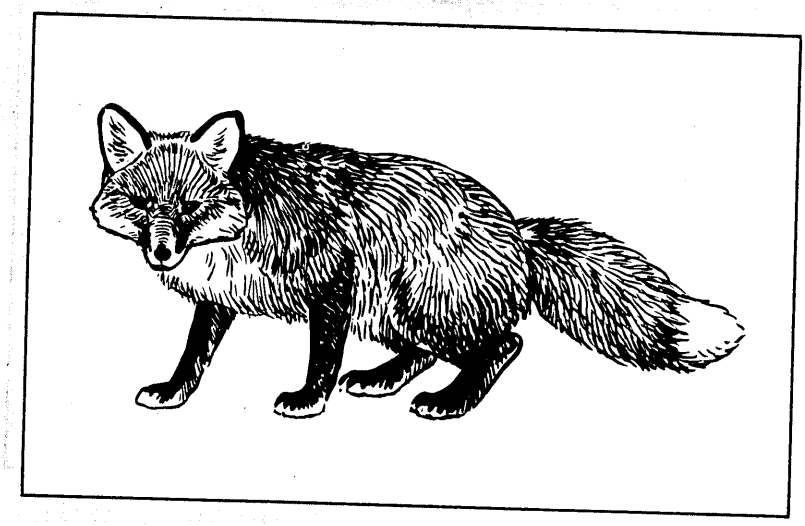
A typical example is the statute in Minnesota which permits a bounty of ten cents per dozen to be paid on blackbirds which are protected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Another reason bounty payments are in disrepute with game management men is the frequency with which

BOUNTIES ARE BUNK

by

Roger M. Latham



NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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WASHINGTON 6, D.C.

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WILDLIFE IN THE ECONOMY OF ALASKA

BIOLOGICAL PAPERS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA

NUMBER 1 (REVISED) DECEMBER, 1957

WASHINGTON STATE
Game Bulletin
GAME DEPARTMENT

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON JULY, 1957 VOLUME 9, NO. 7

What is a Predator?

It all depends upon your point of view. The average sportsman will say "a cougar or coyote." The game farm manager will give you a list of birds and animals that would surprise you. Many orchardists in this state would tell you "it's those blankety-blank deer!" Forestry men won't stutter when they name the bear, porcupine and even the innocuous rabbit. Fish biologists will mutter darkly about the merganser, and so on. Webster defines a predator as a bird or animal that lives by preying on other animals, birds, insects, even including crops and buildings.

A predator acquires its unsavory cognomen because of its relationship with the affairs of man. It destroys something that man wants, for one reason or another. Even a termite becomes a predator when it consumes the foundation of your home, instead of an old log, deep in the wilderness area.

The reasons man applies the epithet predator to many wildlife species are numerous, varied, and often more than casually interesting.

In this state 13 species of birds and 15 species of animals are officially called predators, primarily because of their forays against game species. Among the animals so-called are the bear, which are classed as predators only in certain regions, where they have become destructive to valuable growing timber. With their powerful claws they rip away the outer bark to uncover the savory sap-filled cambium layer of soft wood which forms the new growth on trees.

Most timber men would include the phlegmatic porcupine in their little black books, although this prickly customer does not carry the doubtful honor of being listed officially as a predator. "Porky's" activities, although largely nocturnal, take him up young trees to a point where they begin to bend under his weight. He will then comfortably gnaw his way up or down, and often completely around the tree stem, leaving no protective bark through which sap can ascend for future growth. The result is a potential fine piece of timber with the top portion dead or dying, eventually rotting and lost to man.

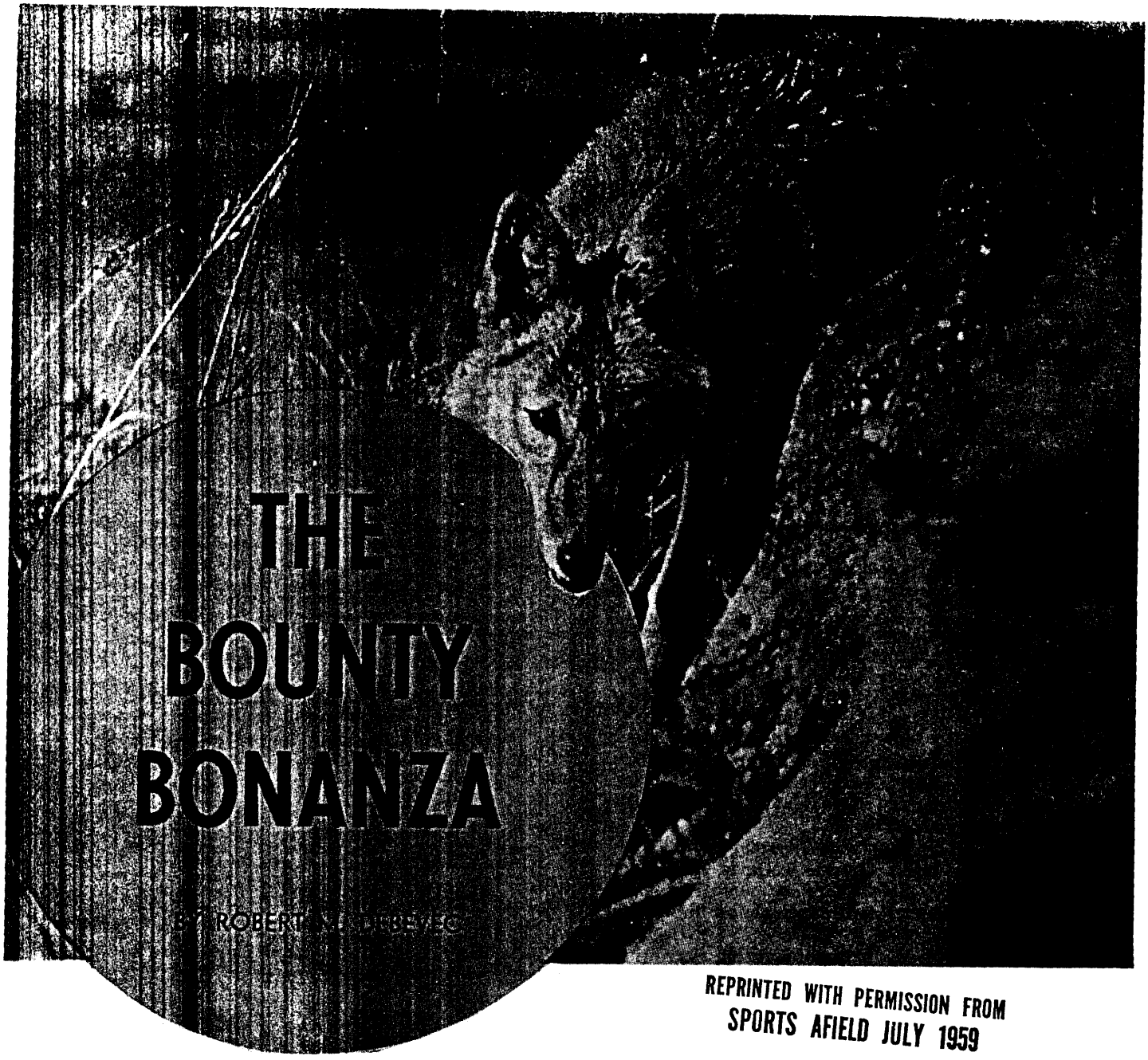
Well known to hunters are the cougar, bobcat and coyote, all predatory because of their toll against deer and elk, as well as upland game birds. Some sources say that a cougar will average at least one deer kill a week the year around. For this reason, an outlaw's price rests upon his crafty head. Although seldom seen, this wily feline is still numerous enough in Washington to average about 100 bounties each year for the past 20 years. Equally destructive in relation to his size, the bobcat has been bountied in numbers exceeding 1,000 each year for the same period.

The resourceful coyote carried a bounty on his wary head until 1949, with an average take of around 7,000 yearly, mostly as a result of happenstance sighting by hunters. The development of special poisons however, which have little if any effect on other than canine species, brought about a change in the methods of coyote control, and today the coyote is one of the state's lesser problems.

The fox in some areas has become a headache, principally because of its fondness for operations in the vicinity of farms, where its penchant for chicken dinners is easily satisfied. The headache ensues because it is often impractical to use either poison or traps to curtail Br'er Fox's depredations, since Fido is likely to wind up a victim of these control methods.

Perhaps surprising to some people is the fact that uncontrolled dogs and tabbies are actually the villains in far too many cases of deer and upland birds destroyed. Dogs can easily run down a deer, especially in times of heavy snow,

(Continued on page 3)



THE BOUNTY BONANZA

BY ROBERT M. DEBEVEC

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MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY

By A. W. Schorger, Emeritus Professor
U. W. Dept. of Forestry and Wildlife Management

Reprint from
WISCONSIN ACADEMY REVIEW
Winter, 1958
WISCONSIN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, ARTS AND LETTERS

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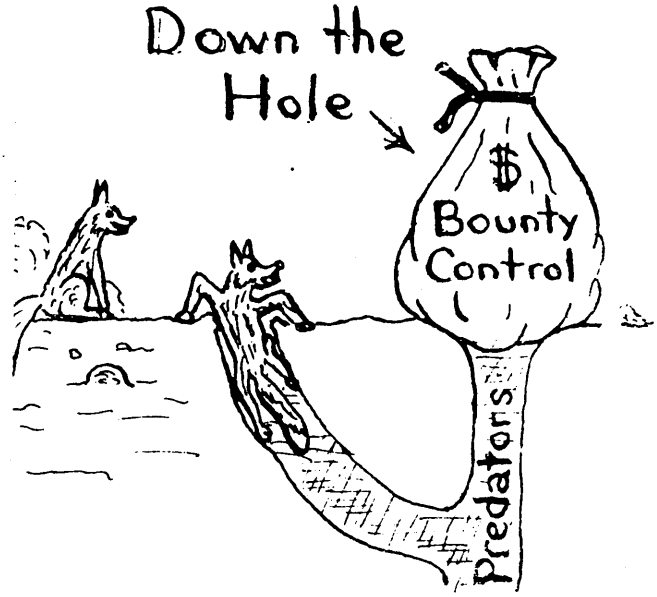
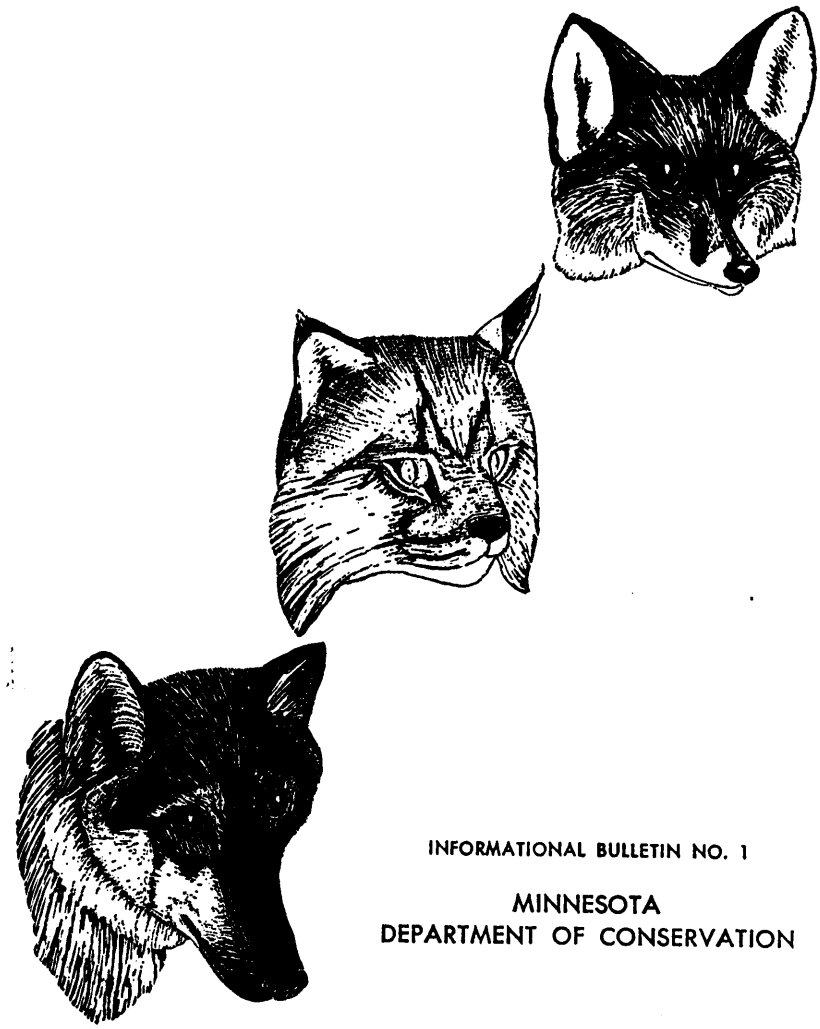
WHAT'S THIS BOUNTY BUSINESS?



PREDATORS IN MINNESOTA
THEIR ROLE AND CONTROL



INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN NO. 1

MINNESOTA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

to integrate the courthouse lunchroom One Negro woman was beaten several times by a baseball bat wielding segregationist.

FAMILIAR ARGUMENT . . .

BOUNTY PROGRAMS: OFTEN ABUSED, NOW ARE THEY REALLY EFFECTIVE?

By BOB De ARMOND
Special to the Empire

The destruction of alleged predatory animals, birds and fishes, and particularly such destruction accomplished by means of bounty payments has been a subject of legislative discussion and controversy since Alaska's early territorial days.

At one time and another Alaska has paid bounties on wolves, coyoytes, hair seals, wolverines, eagles and Dolly Varden trout. Other species singled out as fit subjects for bounties include sea lions, gulls merganser ducks and beluga whales.

Debate on the propriety of a bounty on the bald eagle, much of it orbiting around the flag enlivened more than one session, and while arguments about wolves, seals and trout never soared to quite such noble heights they were sometimes fully as heated.

It was once alleged on the floor of the Senate than an industrious northerner was operating a full scale wolf farm and doing extremely well in the bounty business and there is small doubt that more than one bounty was collected on a wolf pelt and foreleg smuggled over the border from Canada

Counterfeiters

So far as is known nobody ever collected two dollars from the territory on a fake pair of eagle claws but one ingenious fellow was caught and convicted of counterfeiting seal scalps. He cut the entire skin into "scalps" and burned in eye-holes and nostrils. He had a gold mine going until he grew careless in his work and turned out a batch with the hair running in the wrong direction.

Aside from such skullduggery, however, there is a real question whether bounty payments get rid of predators where and when the need for control is greatest. There is a tendency, too, to continue or extend bounty payments because of the need for cash income in certain areas rather than because predator control is necessary or desirable.

This is true of bounties on the hair seal, which undeniably destroy valuable salmon and damage fishermen's nets. For many years the northern limit of the seal

President Arrives In Uruguay As Trip Nears End

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay —(AP)— President Eisenhower arrived in Uruguay today and was greeted with an abrazo. It was the first time he had received that traditional Latin American bearhug on his South American tour.

The gesture of affection was made by Benito Nardone, president of the governing council of this smallest of the South American republics, as Eisenhower stepped from his plane. The other eight members of the council shook hands.

About 1,000 persons, standing on a terrace of Carrasco Airport terminal looked on. The day was beautiful and the temperature a comfortable 71.

Eisenhower hailed Uruguayans as champions of democratic principles and declared their institutions have won the applause "of every American, school children and adults alike."

The United States, he said, treasures its partnership with Uruguay and other Latin American countries and "wants this partnership to be a model of mutually helpful cooperation among sovereign states, some large, some small."

Nardone praised the President as a crusader for A[illegible] hood and friendsh[illegible]

was 8:10 p.m.; the speed, a brakeman said, about 75 m.p.h.; the visibility fair—a cloudy sunset.

Ignored Warning

Investigators said the oil rig driver apparently had ignored a reflectorized warning at the railroad crossing. They said he had paused only momentarily — but did not make a full stop — before driving his cargo of more than 7,000 gallons of crude oil onto the tracks.

Witnesses told the investigators the driver seemed to turn his vehicle in a direction parallel to the tracks as the train bore down on him. Then he fled the cab.

The rear oil trailer wrapped around the locomotive and exploded with a thunderous eruption seen four miles away.

The foward oil tanker was thrown 100 yards, badly damaged and leaking, but it did not catch fire.

The train veered crazily on, its four diesel units aflame, its forward trucks knocked off the tracks by the tremendous impact.

9 Cars Jackknife

Nine of the 11 cars jackknifed into one another like a row of huge steel dominoes knocked askew.

Flame from the initial explosion swept back the length of the train, but only forward cars in the tangled jumble caught fire. The first three of the four diesel units were charred to blackened rubble — reduced, one newsman suggested, to hadly more than half their original size.

The last two cars remained on the tracks.

Eleven hundred feet of track were torn up, some of it twisted into grotesque loops around the shattered cars.

Fifteen ambulances came from four nearby towns. Helicopters helped shuttle the injured to three Bakersfield hospitals.

An ambulance driver, Don Williams, said: "Surprisingly enough there was not too much crying or moaning. Everybody seemed to have pretty good control."

Engineer L. A. Snyder and Fire-

COOPERATIVE PROJECT AGREEMENT
between
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service
and
STATE OF ALASKA
Department of Fish and Game
Department of Natural Resources
Department of Health and Welfare

THIS AGREEMENT, entered into between the United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, hereinafter known as the "Service" and the State of Alaska, Departments of Fish and Game, Natural Resources and Health and Welfare, hereinafter known as the 'Cooperator'

WITNESSETH, that,

WHEREAS, the Service is authorized by the Act of March 2, 1931, (46 Stat. 1468), and the Act approved August 14, 1946 (60 Stat. 1080), to provide assistance to and cooperate with States, individuals, and public and private agencies, organizations, and institutions in the control of predatory animals and rodents injurious to agriculture, horticulture, forests, animal husbandry, wild game, and public health, and

WHEREAS, the Cooperator is authorized by State law to cooperate with the Service in the control of predatory animals and injurious rodents, and desires to cooperate in such a program, and has funds available for that purpose;

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

1. A program for controlling predation and depredations by predacious mammals and injurious rodents will be undertaken in the State of Alaska when the need for such control is mutually recognized. Operations as provided for by this agreement shall be under the supervision, either direct or through technical guidance, of the Service, in order that the work may be conducted in

MARINE MAMMALS IN RELATION TO COMMERCIAL FISHERIES IN ALASKA*

by

JAMES W. BROOKS
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Juneau, Alaska

A variety of mammals inhabit the seas adjacent to Alaska. Seven species of pinnipeds and more than a dozen species of whales and porpoises are common to abundant. Certain of these mammals have been harvested in the past, both for commercial and subsistence purposes, though at present only the fur seal and walrus have much commercial value to Americans. The walrus, ringed seal, bearded seal, and to a lesser extent the harbor seal and ribbon seal, are still utilized domestically by Alaskan natives. In addition, the natives harvest many belugas, some bowhead whales, and an occasional California grey whale. The Japanese in recent years have intensified their whale fishery in the Aleutian Island region, but no American whaling enterprise currently exists in these northern waters. Beyond these direct benefits afforded mankind by marine mammals, their aesthetic quality rates appreciation that will increase directly as better tourist transport is developed. Were fish not of such enormous importance, we might let the matter stand here, but the actual situation is that some marine mammals are, to varying extents, detrimental in their relationships to commercial fisheries. I would like to review our knowledge of these relationships. For the most part, the information is based on investigations conducted during the past few years by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

It might be well to point out that the problem of predation and depredations by marine mammals has several aspects. An objective biologist is primarily concerned with purely biological considerations. Commercial fishermen stress negative economic factors, that is, the value of fish lost; natives stress the opposite -- the value realized from harvesting the mammals. Much of the public sees only the aesthetic value. These differing interests aggravate the original problem, because the best conceived predation control program is certain to have no small amount of heartfelt criticism directed at it. This is not to imply that criticism of present programs may not be legitimate in some cases. Rather it accentuates the need for more facts so that all elements of the problem can be confidently balanced.

Because marine mammals are, by virtue of their environment, closely associated with fish, it may be well to comment briefly even on the more unlikely predators. The baleen whales, for example, are seldom thought of as fish predators or competitors, yet many of them share a Euphausiid diet with salmon in their ocean rearing areas. Some of them also eat fish, though in this connection, the little piked whale may be the only species worthy of note. It frequently concentrates in areas where herring are abundant, and from observations in the Sitka Sound area, I am satisfied that it does indeed forage on these fish. The influence of the baleen whales on fish production is presently an academic consideration, and might best be left at that.

Porpoises are fish eaters, though the character of their diet remains little known. There are a few references in the literature which indicate that they feed

*Paper presented at the Eighth Alaskan Science Conference, Anchorage, Alaska, September 10-13, 1957.

See P. 4 — bounty system

Nov. 28 - Dec 3, 1960

RESOLUTION OF ALASKA BOARD OF FISH AND GAME RELATING TO PREDATOR CONTROL

WHEREAS, the Alaska Legislature has clearly and specifically vested in the Department of Fish and Game the duties, powers, and responsibilities involved in the administration of the entire State program for the conservation and development of the State's commercial fisheries, sport fish, birds, game and fur bearing animals (Section 17, Chapter 64, SLA 1959), and

WHEREAS, the State Legislature has additionally authorized the Board of Fish and Game to enter into cooperative agreements with State, Federal, or other agencies to promote fish and game management (Section 6, Subsection 10, Chapter 94, SLA 1959), and

WHEREAS, the Departments of Fish and Game, Natural Resources, and Health and Welfare have already entered into a cooperative project agreement with the Fish and Wildlife Service to effectively apply and coordinate predator control activities in Alaska in accordance with actual need and with the desires and intentions of the Legislature as set forth in the above cited statutes, and

WHEREAS, the Fish and Wildlife Service, Branch of Predator and Rodent Control has recommended to the Alaska Legislative Council that legislation be enacted which would constrain the State Government to cooperate with the Federal Government in predator control activities, and

WHEREAS, such legislation would restore to the Federal Government certain authorities granted to the State under the Statehood Act in connection

WILLIAM FITZWATER

THE ECOLOGY AND ECONOMICS OF PREDATOR MANAGEMENT

PUBLISHED BY THE
PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION
HARRISBURG • PA. • 1951

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STUDIES ON STELLER SEA LION (*EUMETOPIAS JUBATA*) IN ALASKA[1]

OLE A. MATHISEN

Fisheries Research Institute, University of Washington, Seattle

The production of salmon in Alaska has fallen from a pack of more than 7 million cases in 1935 to slightly less than 3 million cases in 1958. A large number of explanations have been offered for the mentioned decline. Basically the suggested causes fall into three categories: (1) overfishing, (2) change in productivity of the environment, and (3) predation by sea lions, seals, belugas, Dolly Varden trout, and other predators. Complaints have been made for a long time against marine mammals, particularly the sea lions. As far back as in 1899 plans were made for a large-scale killing of the sea lions in California as a result of petitions by the fishermen and the salmon industry (Smith, 1904).

In spite of the long history of the problem, no well-established basis exists today for relating the decline in the Alaska salmon fisheries directly to the predation by Steller sea lions. But since the mortality inflicted upon a declining stock of salmon by predators becomes progressively more important with increasingly smaller runs of fish, the volume of salmon taken by sea lions today deserves an earnest consideration. Any reduction of a source of natural mortality directly means increased commercial catches.

In 1953 the Fisheries Research Institute began a systematic study of the herds of Steller sea lions in Alaska to provide a factual basis for an evaluation of the predation of sea lions on salmon in this area.[2] The principal objectives of the study have been to determine the actual number of sea lions in Alaska, to provide data about their food habits, and to study those phases of their life history and behavior that pertain either to a control program of the herds or to a commercial utilization of the meat.

The problem of assessing the number of sea lions in Alaska is a difficult one, as the rookeries are spread out along 3,000 miles of coast line ranging from the Canadian border to Attu, the most westerly island in the Aleutian chain. Habitually the Steller sea lions seek the most inhospitable islands and cliffs for their breeding and hauling grounds. The majority of these places cannot be approached

[1]Contribution No. 52, College of Fisheries, University of Washington.

[2]The study on this project was first financed by the Alaska Salmon Industry and has been continued under contract to Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.