Fish and Game-Selway
Annual Report
January 11, 1923

District Forester,
Missoula, Mont.

Dear Sir:

Predatory animals are a serious menace to the game, especially deer and antelope. The damage will not increase unless steps are taken to deal with the menace. They can be hunted or trapped during the summer, but the damage is done during the fall and winter months.

Reference is made to Circular G-196.

As stated in last year's report, the Selway should be considered a Game Forest. Recreation is now one of the chief assets and the completion of the Lolo Pass Road will greatly increase the use of the Forest for recreation. Much of the area of the Selway is unsuitable for grazing domestic stock on account of the topography and inaccessibility. The game use much of the range adjacent to the rivers during the winter months, and it is important that winter feed be available for them along the streams.

It is difficult to give reliable information on the numbers of game animals on the Forest. The only way that reliable information could be obtained is by a winter census, while the game are using the lower ranges. This matter has been discussed with the State Game Warden, but so far no funds have been made available for this purpose by the State. It would be desirable for the State Game Department and the Forest Service to do this work together. It is of sufficient importance to make a project of the work.

Deer, Elk, Moose and Goats are increasing in number on this Forest. This increase is largely due to the Selway Game Preserve, within which hunting is not permitted, and also to the relative inaccessibility of the summer ranges used by the game. Deer have always been plentiful in this part of the country. But Elk, Moose and Goats have materially increased in number since the creation of the Selway Game Preserve. The last year has been a good one for the local field officers and in fire work during previous years.

Added research by
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Date Collected: Apr. 2011
Location: Selway, Montana
Game birds are increasing in number and this especially favorable for Elk, due partly to a favorable winter and spring, and unusually large numbers of Elk calves were seen in all herds observed by Forest officers during the past summer.

The grazing of domestic stock will never be a serious factor in the game problem on the Selway. The Selway Game Preserve is closed to grazing and there will always be sufficient feed along the streams to care for the game animals during the winter months.

The problem of wolves, coyotes and dogs is of importance as a menace to the game, especially in the Middle Fork area where they are most abundant. The coyotes and wolves are on the increase and the bounty on these animals is inadequate. The local trappers have little success in catching either coyotes or wolves, and apparently the only solution to the problem is the employment of government trappers. For this purpose, two men are needed, one to work on the Selway River and the other on the Lochsa.

The trapping of fur-bearing animals on the Selway Game Reserve is prohibited by the State Game Department, and no permits are being issued for trapping predatory animals within the Preserve. This appears to be a good step in the right direction, since the number of fur-bearing animals has steadily decreased. Trappers are reporting a very light catch and few fur-bearing animals in evidence anywhere.

All Forest Officers on this Forest are deputy game wardens and take an active part in the enforcement of Game Laws. No arrests have been made by Forest Officers during the past year, the same policy being followed in dealing with the local deputy warden as last year. State officials are given assistance whenever they request it, but no assistance is asked for in handling cases which come to our knowledge. The local Deputy Game Warden is discreet and probable cases cannot be safely discussed with him. In matters of general game policy, licenses, fish planting, etc., good cooperation is obtained. The attitude of the local peace officers is excellent and it is not necessary to use Reg. 2-7 to secure the desired action. Good cooperation has been received from the local Deputy Game Warden in fire work during previous years.
Game birds are increasing in number and this increase is particularly apparent with ruffed and blue grouse. The number of native pheasants appears to be less than last year, but is much above the average. The Selway Game Preserve is largely responsible for this increase in game birds. As stated in last year's report, it would be advisable to establish a bird sanctuary including a strip one eighth mile in width, along the Lolo Pass highway from the Forest Boundary to Canyon Creek. No grazing restrictions will be necessary in this area.

The fish supply should increase some in the Middle Fork of the Clearwater and the lower portions of the Selway and Lochsa Rivers, since about 200,000 fish have been planted in these streams within the last two years. This increase is, however, temporary, since the streams are heavily fished, and large numbers of suckers, squaw fish and bull-trout are found in all of these streams. Artificial restocking will have to be done in all streams that are heavily fished. The fry or fingerlings required for restocking can be obtained from the State Hatchery at Sandpoint. 135,000 Eastern Brook and 45,000 Rainbow trout were planted in the Middle Fork of the Clearwater River during the past year. Fish are fully protected during the spawning season. Restocking cannot be accomplished by closing streams or parts of them for a few years.

No difficulty has ever been encountered in getting transportation for fish from the railroad to points along roads. Local sportmen gladly cooperate in this work. Fish taken to outlying streams and lakes have been handled by the local Deputy Game Warden and Forest Service employees. Fish can be distributed here from June 1 to October 1.

There are no local associations for the advancement of fish and game work in this locality. Public opinion seems to be improving in fish and game matters, but there is still much room for improvement and education along these lines.

Very truly yours,

FRANK J. JEFFERSON, Forest Supervisor,

/s/
By Frank J. Jefferson

No reliable data on the number of game animals, by sex, can be obtained here until a count is made on the winter range.
To accompany letter of Jan. 11, 1923.

G.

Fish and Game-Selway

Census of Game Animals.

Elk 1000, Black-Tail Deer 1000, White-Tail Deer 3000, Moose 70, Goats 120, Sheep 20, Silvertip Bear 5, other Bear 170.

Census for Bearing Animals.

Beaver 500, Fox 150, Marten 500, Mink 500, Otter 200, Fisher 20.

Last year's estimate on Marten was considerably too low.

Census Predatory Animals.

Wild Cat 200, Canadian Lynx 50, Cougar 40, Wolf 25, Coyote 800.

Game Animals Killed by Man.

Elk 36, Deer 65, Goat 7, Bear 9.

Game Animals Killed by Predatory Animals.

Elk 40, Deer 150, Goat 3, Sheep 9.

Fish Distribution.

135,000 Eastern Brook and 45,000 Rainbow trout were planted in forest waters. Fish were secured from the Sandpoint (Idaho) State Hatchery. Less than 2% were lost. Fish were planted in the Middle Fork and the lower Lochsa Rivers.

Game Protection.

No arrests have been made by Forest Officers for violation of the Game Laws during the past year.