

Department of FISH & GAME
R. E. THOMAS
Warden.

State of Idaho

C. C. MOORE, GOVERNOR
BOISE

J. W. KEEFFE
Chief Clerk.

NOVEMBER 22, 1923

MR. DAVE LEWIS
Clover, Idaho

My dear Mr. Lewis:

I am informed by Harry Shellworth of this city that you are more or less under the impression that the Game Department has jurisdiction over the bounty paid upon predatory animals and is responsible for the delay in these payments, and also that this department was instrumental in closing the season on marten, fox and fisher throughout the state of Idaho and for fixing the open season on mink, raccoon and otter in only the extreme northern counties.

I had the pleasure of meeting you some time ago when you called on this department at the time you brought down your cougar skins and feeling assured that you have only the friendliest feeling for the department and have its interest at heart, I will endeavor to explain the situation as it really is.

In the first place, the bounty offered or paid upon predatory animals is handled entirely through the sheriffs of the various counties in conjunction with the State Department of Agriculture. As I understand the situation, the payment of bounty claims is more or less governed or controlled by receipts for taxes which may in part explain the reason why your claims have not been taken care of. While the matter does not come within the jurisdiction of the Game Department, I shall be very glad to refer this matter personally to Mark A. Means, Commissioner of Agriculture, and ask him to write you a letter explaining matters more in detail.

Referring to the present closed season on fur-bearing animals, let me assure you that this was not occasioned by any recommendation of the Game Department. I might add, for your information that a bill was introduced in the legislature, House Bill 236, which bill provided for an open season on marten, fox and fisher throughout the entire state between the dates of October 1st and February 1st of each year, both dates inclusive. This bill was passed with but one dissenting vote, with the understanding, however, that the authors of this bill; that is, the legislative Fish and Game Committee, would introduce a bill later on correcting a few ambiguities occurring in House Bill 236.

MR. LEWIS
Page #2
11/22/23

Later on, or in the closing hours of the session, a subsequent bill was introduced, House Hill 268, in which bill, inadvertently or otherwise, no provision was made for an open season on marten, fox and fisher. I might add, also, that the bill was introduced and passed, if I remember correctly, on the same day - was not even printed, and the Game Department did not see a copy of this bill until after same had been passed by the legislature. I want to assure you that it was never the intention of the department to close the season on these fur-bearing animals. On the other hand, we do not make the laws. When introduced, the various provisions for closed seasons, bag limits, etc. are supported or rejected by the members of the legislature from each particular county, who are presumed to represent the wishes of their constituents in their own county. We might, after three or four years' experience, suggest a perfectly good game bill, but by the time the two houses of the legislature get through striking out this section and adding another, or insisting on a certain provision being included, or an open season eliminated, after its passage, we certainly wouldn't recognize our own recommendation.

Had we been given the opportunity, we would have been glad to use every effort to defeat same, but as it was, we were not so advised.

I trust that this letter will make matters clear to you and your friends in that section and will serve to relieve this department from the responsibility.

At the request of Mr. Shellworth, I am sending you two or three copies of the Fish and Game Laws as amended at the last session of the legislature.

With kindest regards, I am

Very truly yours,

STATE GAME WARDEN,


Chief Clerk.

K:R