

April 21, 1978

Honorable Frank Church
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Senator Church:

It has come to our attention that the current Administration has decided to oppose the legislation concerning a non-game Fish & Wildlife Conservation Act (H.R. 10255 and H.R. 10915 and S. 1140). This is a curious position for an Administration which came in on a platform of conservation of our Nation's National Resources.

In the past, funding for non-game programs has been sadly lacking. Any funding allocated most often came from the coffers of State fish & game departments or through Pittman-Robertson or Dingle-Johnson funds, all paid for by the licensed hunting and fishing public. Therefore, little has actually been done for those species not providing a direct commodity value to the public. As a result of this lack of concern, not-hunted species have the dubious distinction of being well-represented on the current list of endangered and threatened wildlife, a list nearly devoid of game species.

We, as a professional wildlife organization, are concerned as to the Office of Management & Budget's role in actively making a strong effort to kill the proposed legislation. We wonder what business it is of theirs? What experts are advising them as to the public's desires?; as to the needs of non-game fish and wildlife in this nation? H. R. 10915 is designed to provide its own funding from excise taxes on items used by non-consumptive recreationists. Similar programs, the Pittman-Robertson Act and the Dingle-Johnson Act, have both been highly successful. Why not a similar act for non-game species?

Under the Multiple-Use Act of 1960, the act which guides management of public lands in the National Forest System, it is stated that management will be based on "harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources, each with the other, without impairment of the productivity of the land, with consideration being given to the relative values of the various resources, and not necessarily the combination of uses that will give the greatest dollar return or the greatest unit output!"

The Federal Land Policy & Mgt. Act of 1976 adopted by Congress for federal lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, provides for the implementation of programs for the conservation of all non-game birds with emphasis on sensitive species; or those of high economic, aesthetic or ecological importance.

In the recently published 1975 National Survey of Fishing & Hunting, & Wildlife Associated Recreation published by the Department of Interior, non-consumptive wildlife uses exceeded consumptive uses by 300%. This should indicate the

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interest and concern of the American public towards preservation and enhancement of these species.

As a concerned organization of professional wildlife biologists, we urge you to support legislation as written in H.R. 10915. I would also request your explanation as to the Administration's opposition to this legislation and as to the responsibility of the Office of Management & Budget in regards to interpreting and/or determining public welfare.

Sincerely,

W. Dean Carrier
President, Idaho Chapter TWS

CC: Harry Hodgeden

Identical letters sent to: James McCure
Steve Symms
George Hansen
Jimmy Carter