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South Fork
Nezperce

MANAGEMENT
ANNUAL REPORTS.
1922

R-1

1922

Annual Game Report

Nezperce National Forest

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1. General Conditions Affecting Big Game.

(a) Three of the district rangers report that Deer are on the increase and this statement is supported by the observations of this office. On the Salmon River district the principal cause for the increase is attributed to the Black Lake Game Preserve. On the rest of the forest the increase can be attributed to several factors, among which are mild winters during past two years, inaccessible country being a large factor and not very many hunters considering the area of the forest as a whole.

The Clearwater district is somewhat of a problem in itself and while there may not be any increase as stated by the district ranger, yet the deer are probably holding their own.

The few elk on the forest seem to be holding their own while the moose have increased one or two head.

(b) During the spring of 1922 Ranger Collins made a very thorough investigation of the number of deer killed by predatory animals along the South Fork of the Clearwater. By a careful checking of all carcasses found by settlers, trappers and himself, he found that 120 carcasses had been found which had been killed as follows:

Coyotes	110
Mt. Lion	8
Lynx	2
	<hr/>
	120

These carcasses were all found within the area shown as winter range. If this many were actually found, how many more were not found? It is believed that at least as many were killed that were not found as were found. Hence the rangers statement that the deer are on the decrease on the Clearwater district due primarily to destruction by coyotes.

Archival research by
Susan Swan
University of Idaho Library
Date Collected: APR 25 1981
Source: Nezperce National Forest

At one time there were a large number of Mt. sheep in the Seven Devils country, possibly several hundred judged from the statements of various early settlers. These have decreased until now there are only a few estimated at 10 or 12 head. There has been no loss from disease since no carcasses have been found, and the area is well covered by stock men during the summer season. Mt. lion have been fairly plentiful and the loss is generally attributed to them by the local residents. Several calves, yearlings and colts have been killed by Mt. lion during the past two years which further supports this theory.

Grazing has had no influence whatever in the matter since a large part of the area used by the sheep is rough, broken and virtually inaccessible to domestic stock and ample feed has always been left for the game. The sheep of course, frequent the bluffy rim rock areas and to this fact can be traced the success of the lion in exterminating them. It is easy for the lion to get above the sheep and to spring down upon them, since it is well known that a peculiarity of Mt. Sheep is that they never look up for danger but always control their movements so as to watch the ground below them relying upon the inaccessible ground above for protection in that direction.

There was at one time a large number of sheep in the Sheep Hill - Burnt Knob country between Bargamin and Sabe Creeks. Their numbers have decreased the last few years due to the presence of some disease similar to scabies. Predatory animals also cause heavy inroads on the deer in the breaks along Salmon River killing possibly 150 each winter.

(c) The rangers are unanimous that the greatest single factor in the protection of game animals at this time is the destruction of predatory animals. This can be accomplished by two methods, the first and surest being to increase the bounty on coyotes to the point where it will be profitable to hunt them for the bounty alone, the State taking the hides and selling them and using the proceeds to help pay the bounties. This would mean a heavy expenditure of funds for two or three years but after that it would not amount to anything as there would be but very few coyotes. The second method is to hire competent hunters working under the supervision of the Biological Survey. This forest should have at least two of these men for several years.

This matter was thoroughly discussed with the State Game Warden this last summer and he promised to have the local deputy trap coyotes in the Clearwater district this winter and that he would send a competent trapper to look after the lion in the Seven Devils country. However, as near as can be learned the local deputy has done nothing nor has anything been done about trapping the lion.

Game laws are fairly well respected by the people residing on the forest. It is believed that there is but very little unseasonable killing and this can be stopped both by education and enforcement provided the officers responsible try hard enough.

(d) The Black Lake Game Preserve is located as shown on the map. As stated above there has been an increase in the deer in this district, due to the existence of this preserve. The laws are well observed and enforced. The carrying capacity of the grazing divisions included in the preserve are kept low in order to protect the feed for the game. There is also a large amount of forage which is inaccessible to domestic stock but which can be and is utilized by the game. No additional regulations are believed necessary.

(e) There has for some years been considerable local agitation for a game preserve in the Bargamin Creek country. This matter was taken up with the District Forester last February and a preliminary report was submitted. A petition was circulated in the Elk City country this fall and about 50 signers secured which included 75% of the residents in that locality. The area desired for this preserve is shown on the map.

The time to create a game preserve is while there is still some game in the country to preserve. The Buffalo were nearly extinct before it occurred to the American people that it might be well to preserve a few for the edification of posterity. The same is almost true of all our other game. No country is inaccessible to the hunter any more. This in spite of the statement in the letter from District Four of March 20, 1922. The service is spending millions to make these Black countrys accessible for fire protec-

tion. The hunter will surely follow. Hence it behooves us to prepare to preserve the game now.

It is believed that the New Mexico, idea of many small preserves instead of a few large preserves is the surest and best way to preserve the game so as to provide the greatest amount of sport for the hunter and at the same time prevent the entire destruction of all game. This proposed preserve is comparatively small, it comprises both winter and summer range and it is surrounded by ideal hunting country as well as vast areas of excellent summer range. There are within it today Moose, Elk, Blacktail Deer, Whitetail deer, mountain sheep, mountain goat and many representative fur bearing animals.

In addition to the petition for the creation of this preserve, the Grangeville Commercial Club will pass a resolution in favor of it and numerous sportsmen have expressed themselves as approving the move.

(f) As stated above there does not seem to be any very great amount of infractions of the game laws. As evidenced by conversation, cooperation between State and Forest Service officials seems to be good. Friendly relations are maintained and much good work in planting fish has been accomplished through cooperation.

No violations have been reported to the State officers. One suspected violation was reported which upon investigation by the State officer was found to be no violation.

No fires were reported by State officers.

There seems to be a distinct need for more deputy game wardens who will get out into the hills and perform some constructive work in managing the game. At present the areas are too large for the deputies to handle properly and therefore the number of State deputies should be increased. The period should be yearlong.

No changes are suggested to be made in the cooperative agreement. In practically all cases action under Reg. T-7 is not necessary in order to obtain proper court action. The State laws appear to be satisfactory in handling game violation cases.

2. Game Birds

(a) The Salmon River and Hump districts report an exceptional increase in numbers of all birds. The Clearwater and Elk City district report exactly the opposite. The latter statement does not conform to the observations of members of this office. Seemingly there were greater numbers of birds this year than have ever been noted before. In September riding from Wickiup Ranger Station to Graves Point one was never out of sight of a grouse in the air, more often flocks of 10 or 12 were in the air at once. Down in the gulches and creek bottoms along the Salmon and Snake were thousands of California Quail. It was nothing unusual to see a flock of 40 or 50 of these birds in one place. Many local residents have commented on the unusually large number of game birds this year. All species seemed to be well represented. Blue or dusky grouse, pheasant, fool hen and California quail were all plentiful.

(b) Several open winters, and an early dry spring which was conducive to hatching of a large percentage of the eggs probably caused this condition. Many also attribute it to the large numbers of grasshoppers and crickets which furnished excellent feed for the birds.

(c) In Idaho County the present law provides the following open seasons for game birds:

Native pheasant or grouse 9/15 to 10/15 inclusive
Blue or dusky grouse 8/15 to 9/30 inclusive
Fool hens are protected at all times

This overlapping of open seasons is a very bad thing and should be discontinued. Only the exceptional hunter knows or cares what kind of a grouse he is shooting at and after the feathers are removed who can tell what species it is? The same open season should apply to these birds and then there cannot be any question about which is which.

It is recommended that the open season for both these species be established from 8/15 to 9/30.

3. Fish

(a) Taken as a whole the streams draining this forest are not suitable for the propagation of fish. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule. This is due to the fact that the smaller streams are very

swift following the beds of V shaped steep gulches and canyons filled with large boulders with few quiet pools and natural waters for fish. They are what may be called wild water. In addition most of them have been placer mined and wherever this takes place all of the natural food for fish is destroyed and it takes many years to replace it.

Under these conditions fish are not very plentiful and any increase in fishing is bound to result in a decrease in the numbers of fish. The rangers seem to believe that this has taken place, we are faced with the necessity for much planting in order to keep our streams stocked. The Little Salmon and Rapid Rivers and the South Fork of the Clearwater are very heavily fished by transients or tourists and it will be necessary to stock these streams heavily every year in order to keep up the supply of fish from year to year.

(b) It may be necessary to secure some relief in this way but we are not at present well enough advised to make any suggestions.

(c) The present law seems to be satisfactory.

(d) There is only one dam on the Forest which has any affect on fishing conditions at this time. This is located at the Grangeville Electric Light and Power Company dam on the South Fork due east of Grangeville. This dam was built several years ago and last year a fish ladder was put in under State supervision. No fish have ever been known to go up the ladder because it is too steep and there is no water at the foot of the ladder so that the fish can get to it except in very high water. Local people who are informed as to the circumstances state that the Power Company was prepared to put in a good ladder where it would have been usable, but that the Field Deputy in charge of that work for the State changed their plans and laid out the present ladder which is of no value for the purpose. Some action should be taken at once to remedy this condition since the decrease in fishing above the dam is extremely marked. Formerly salmon were caught above Elk City but not since this dam was completed.

The dam is 54 feet high located in section 30, T. 30 N., R. 4 E.

(e) There are no canals in need of screening.

(f) The streams in need of stocking on this forest are indicated on the map.

Artificial restocking seems to be the only solution of this problem. The districts desire the following fish:

District	: 1923	: 1924	: 1925	: 1926	: 1927
Salmon River	: 60000	: 60000	: 60000	: 60000	: 60000
Dixie	: 20000	: 15000	: 15000	: 15000	: 15000
Slate Creek	: 50000	: 20000	: 20000	: 20000	: 20000
Clearwater	: 40000	: 40000	: 40000	: 40000	: 40000
Elk City	: 20000	: 20000	: 20000	: 20000	: 20000
Red River	: 20000	: 10000	: 10000	: 10000	: 10000
Total	: 210000	: 165000	: 165000	: 165000	: 165000

These should as a rule be fingerlings since they are surer of living when transplanted. Those for the Salmon River district should be delivered at New Meadows, Idaho. Those for Slate Creek and Clearwater at Grangeville and the others at Stites, Idaho. Any time between May 1 and November 30 they can be planted on the Salmon River and Clearwater districts. On the others from July 1 to September 30.

In most cases transportation will be by motor truck to within a short distance of the water to be planted. This varies from 6 miles to 60 miles over very rough mountain roads. Several successful plants have been made in the Elk City country. The forest has a truck that can be used for this purpose and also it is never any great trouble to line up all the necessary private cars needed.

4. Organization

(a) There is a local deputy game warden at Grangeville whose district includes all the Nezperce. He is usually active in distributing fish, issuing licenses and occasionally takes a short trip into the hills for recreation. Local Forest Officers assist in every manner possible. When there is anything to be done the deputy is called in and the business discussed and arrangements made for handling it.

The territory is too large for one man in the first place and in the second place the wardens should be men who will get out at all seasons and follow the

game, study their habits and work out management plans. None of this work is being done at this time. We need a State organization similar to that in Montana and need it badly.

(b) There are no local associations of any kind.

5. Additional Information

(a) Table #1.

1922 CUMULATIVE CENSUS OF GAME ANIMALS

District	B.T. Deer	W.T. Deer	Elk	Moose	Goat	Sheep	Bear
1	250	250	10	-	-	10	25
3	250	200	65	3	25	-	150
4	50	250	12	3	-	-	40
5	500	200	150	6	50	150	50
Total	1050 ✓	900 ✓	237 ✓	12 ✓	75 ✓	160 ✓	265 ✓

Table #2.

1922 CUMULATIVE CENSUS OF PREDATORY ANIMALS

District	Coyote	Lynx or Wild Cat	Mountain Lion	Wolf
1	200	25	20	-
3	100	15	25	15
4	260	50	20	3
5	100	100	10	-
Total	660 ✓	190 ✓	75 ✓	18? ✓

Table #2-a.

1922 CUMULATIVE CENSUS OF FUR BEARING ANIMALS

District	Beaver	Fox	Martin	Mink	Badger	Otter	Musk Rat
1	-	25	75	100	25	10	-
3	50	25	150	150	50	25	50
4	20	25	30	100	-	25	100
5	200	50	300	200	50	50	200
Total	270 ✓	125 ✓	555 ✓	450 ✓	125 ✓	110 ✓	350 ✓

Table #3.

GAME ANIMALS KILLED BY MAN

District	Year	Deer	Deer	Elk	Goat	Beaver	Number of Hunters
1	1922	-	10	1	-	2	12
3	"	25	25	-	-	10	80
4	"	10	40	-	-	-	120
5	"	25	8	20	3	12	75
Total		60	83	21	3	24	287

Table #4.

1922 GAME ANIMALS KILLED BY PREDATORY ANIMALS

District	Deer	Elk	Moose	Goat	Sheep
1	4	-	-	-	-
3	50	3	-	-	-
4	120	-	-	-	-
5	150	-	-	-	10
Total	324	3	-	-	10

Table #5.

FISH DISTRIBUTION IN 1922

From State Hatchery at Sandpoint

No. Req'd	Species	Number	Date Rec'd.	Condition	Date Rec'd.	Name of Water	% Lost	Net No.
75000	Native	37500	8/10	Good	8/10	Little	none	37500
	or east					Salmon		
Dist. #1	ern					Rapid		
	brook					River		
50000	Brook	20000	7/20	Poor	7/20	Mill	30%	14000
Dist. #3	Native					Creek		
60000	Brook	15000	7/31	Good	7/31	South	1%	13500
Dist. #4	Native					Fork		
						Meadow		
						Creek		
35000	Brook	20000	8/10	Good	8/10	Elk Cr.	30%	14000
	Native					American		
Dist. #5						River		
						Red Riv.		79,000

(b) For the Salmon River district Ranger Deasy reports as follows:

No additional information known on occurrence of species. The mating season for the deer is from October 15 to November 15, and the only habits noticed is the habit of bunching or running in larger bands. It has also been noticed that the greater number of the young are twins. The range in this district seems to be good at all times of the year as the domestic stock use but small portions of the area that the game generally use. The summer range affords many different kinds of weeds and grasses, while the winter range is found to have a large percent of many different kinds of small shrubs and browse. As a rule the young are born the latter part of May and the fore part of June. The deer as a rule shed their horns in January and February.

For the Elk City district Ranger Dyar reports as follows:

The mating and breeding season runs through the months of September, October and sometimes in November. Deer in the months of October, November and sometimes into December. Other game I do not know. The number of young is as a rule one, it is not often that they have twins.

The Elk range from the upper part of the Salmon River breaks in winter to the higher Mt. Meadows and parks in summer. It is very seldom that elk are seen in the breaks during the summer and early fall. While the deer to a certain extent range in or near their winter range the year long. This is true of the mule deer while the white tail is more of a wanderer and who likes the timber and brush range during the hot months of the summer. The mountain goat is to be found on the same range summer and winter, which is the high rocky ridges where in the winter the wind keeps the snow blowed off, leaving the grasses exposed. While the mountain sheep will summer up on some high mountain they will go or nearly always move down to some lower range to winter, and probably miles away from where they summered. There is one bunch of about 20 head that winter in the cliffs on Salmon River between Cove Creek and Indian Creeks that no one knows just where they go for the summer. What few moose we have summer in the vicinity of Moose Butte, and presume that they winter in the same locality. Calif elk have been seen as early as the first of May although I understand that this is some what early. Deer seem to have their fawns the latter part of May and during June. Both the elk and deer shed their horns in March although I have seen deer shed theirs as

late as the 28th of April.

(c) Ranger Deasy reports that there were a greater abundance of game birds during the past season than there were in previous years. The mating season is generally in April, and the number of eggs range from 8 to 10. During the summer season the game birds feed on many different kinds of insects, and bugs, especially grasshoppers. They also feed on many kinds of berries which the haw or thorn berry is the most in abundance. During the winter season the birds feed on the buds and needles of the fir and pine. As a rule the young birds are matured and make fine fries from July 15 to August 15.

Ranger Dyar reports that game birds as a rule mate in May and are nesting by the last of the month, and has seen the young as early as the 15th of June. When he first came to this State 17 years ago, about the only birds he saw were the Blue Jay, Camp Robber, Magpie, Flicker or Sapsucker, Hawks and Owls. Each year there have been a few new birds until now can be seen nearly all of the common birds such as the sparrow, robin, bluebird, purple martin, barn swallow, cliff swallow, bank swallow, grosbeak, crossbeak, meadow lark, redwing blackbird, blackbird, cowbird, wren, humming bird, chickadee, nuthatch, oriole, flicker, yellow hammer, moose bird, blue jay, camp robber, night hawk, kingfisher, turtle dove, screech owl, hoot owl, osprey hawks, cooper hawks, fish hawks, sparrow hawks, redshouldered hawks, bald eagle, brown eagle, turkey buzzard, crow, raven, magpie, and many others that he does not know the name of. The camp robber is the first one to nest, and who build their nests as early as April or in fact just as soon as the snow is gone. They lay 4 or 5 eggs. He has seen one nest with 4 eggs but never found out whether that was all. The other birds mate in May and June and as a rule are nesting in June. Of the smaller birds the number of eggs are from 4 to 5, while the dove, owls, hawks, eagles and buzzard lay 2.

(d) Beaver, Martin, Mink, Muskrat, Lynx, Cat, Badger, Fox and Otter are found on this forest in varying number. The entire forest is trapped to some extent. Elk City reports 12 trappers whorking this winter who have shipped 60 martin, 30 weasel, 6 lynx, 10 coyotes, 2 mink, 1 skunk, and 2 fox so far this winter. Fur is prime from November to March and runs from medium to good.

(e) The following is quoted from the Rangers reports:

Ranger Deasy says, "Having had but little experience with the habits of fish, it is hard to give but little information on the subject. However, it has been noticed that the fish seem to spawn during any of the summer months, as fish taken from these streams show the eggs as late as October. The species found in these streams are the mountain or native trout, white fish, bull trout, suckers and pike. Salmon or salmon trout weighing from 3 to 30 pounds run up these streams during May and June and also in September. From information gathered there have been no epidemics of any kind in these streams."

Ranger Dyar says, "The native brook trout stay in the streams the year long, and spawn in June and July. The reddsides come up into the smaller streams to spawn in September and October. Bull trout the same. Both the reddsides and bull trout stay in the deeper holes all winter and as the water begins to warm up in the early summer they go down the streams to the deeper holes in the main stream. The different species of fish that are to be found in the streams of the district are native brook trout, reddsides, cut throat, rainbow trout, salmon trout, eastern brook, squaw fish, suckers, whitefish and shiners."

(f)

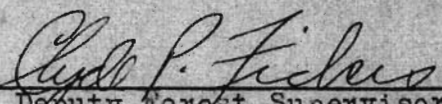
- (1) None
- (2) None
- (3) None

Reference G-210

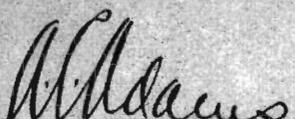
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5-29	:	2	5	3	3
5-30	:	:	2	:	:
6-2	:	:	2	:	:
6-3	:	1	:	5	:
6-7	5	2	2	:	:
6-10	5	:	:	:	:
10-20	2	:	:	:	:
7-1 to 9-30:	5	3	:	:	:
11-14	:	2	:	:	:
12-19	:	:	:	1	3
Total	15	10	11	9	6

Only four men turned in this report hence the small number.

Respectfully submitted


Deputy Forest Supervisor

Approved January 10, 1923.


Forest Supervisor