

THE CONSERVATIONIST



Good spirits reign, as Commission Chairman Arthur R. MacArthur receives the gift certificate from Stanton W. Mead (center), with J. R. Smith looking on.

Consolidated Gives Land to Commission

Twenty thousand acres of Consolidated Water Power and Paper Company holdings in the valley of the Little Eau Pleine River in Wood, Marathon and Portage Counties were given to the State Conservation Commission in April by Stanton W. Mead, president of the company. The lands are to be used for wildlife conservation purposes and will be known as the George W. Mead Wildlife Area in honor of the founder of the company.

Mr. Mead, in making the presentation, said that the company had been buying lands in the Little Eau Pleine valley for almost a quarter of a century with the ultimate objective of creating a huge reservoir to supplement the water on the lower Wisconsin River during low flow periods. When handicaps associated with land purchases caused a postponement of this project, Consolidated, realizing the value of the property to the people of Wisconsin for wildlife conservation, offered the area as a gift to the state.

The area has a great potential for development for prairie grouse,

deer, geese and furbearers, according to J. R. Smith, Game Division Chief. Ditch banks already constructed in earlier drainage efforts and detailed engineering surveys completed by the company will greatly facilitate development by the Department.

Mr. Mead noted that Consolidated Water Power and Paper Company would continue to have a high interest in the management of the area and expressed a desire to assist the Conservation Department in whatever manner possible in future management programs. Game managers, he observed, have planned to utilize the innate characteristics of the area for wildlife.

In acknowledging the action, Commission Chairman Arthur R. MacArthur said, "This gift from See GIFT, Page 3"

Landowners Want Forestry Help

Over four-fifths of the woodland owners in five southern counties contacted recently wanted to keep their woodlands in a productive condition through good management. Those landowners relying on their woods for yearly supplies of lumber and other products—nearly 80 per cent of nearly all contacted—are anxious to enlist the services of the forester to recommend practices for managing woods. Owner resistance, however, was strong against signing any contract or agreement to prearrange sale of their products to area lumber concerns on a long-term basis.

But—only 60 per cent of all the woods owners interviewed knew that the Conservation Department has foresters assigned to each county to assist with forestry problems. And over one-half of the 114 farmers contacted were unaware of the forest tax laws designed to encour-

age woodland owners to practice good forestry.

Such startling facts indicated greater educational efforts are needed.

These are some of the results of the Forest Management Division's sampling of landowners' knowledge and opinions on broad forestry matters in the southern area. Foresters See LANDOWNERS, Page 3

Conservation Congress Recognizes Clubs

Five outstanding conservation clubs have recently been given an award of merit by the Education Committee of the Conservation Congress for their contributions to resource management in the past years. These clubs are Rex Rod and Gun Club, Milwaukee; Plover Fish & Wildlife League, Stevens Point; Wabeno Sportsmen's Club, Wabeno; Tri-County Conserva-

tion Club, St. Croix Falls; and Eau Galle Sportsmen's Club, Eau Galle.

Efforts in resource management included work in tree planting, habitat improvement and land acquisition for public use. Their education efforts include publishing of newsletters at regular intervals, youth programs such as gun safety and boat safety, as well as youth

days at fisheries and shoots.

The clubs have cooperated with the Conservation Department in pheasant releases, fish stocking and rearing, and habitat and feeding programs. The monthly meetings always attempt to have a phase of resource management discussed and explained by specialists, and through movies and local conservationists.

Forest Managers Surveyed on Deer Damage to Forests

Deer cause severe damage on over one-third of the area surveyed. Present timber management plans may have to be altered.

The effect of deer and other forest animals on forest crops has been determined by the forest managers themselves in a special survey. The Forest Advisory Committee, in cooperation with the Conservation Department and the Lake States Council of Industrial Foresters, has recently completed a survey of the major landowners of the state, both public and private. The survey requested essentially an expression of professional opinion of the forest managers of these lands as to the economic effect of animal damage to forest crops.

Ninety-seven per cent of the 59 separate owners from 23 northern and 8 central counties cooperated in the survey, representing an actual ownership of over 5 million acres—about a quarter of the total land area in these counties.

Here are a few of the highlights from the survey:

- Deer cause the most severe economic damage. Runners-up: porcupine, beaver and rabbit.
- Northeastern counties have the most damage (45 per cent of the area owned by cooperators), followed by northwestern (36 per cent) and central (22 per cent) counties. Over-all, 39 per cent of the area suffers deer damage of economic importance.
- No deer damage was reported on Indian Reservations.
- Deer damage is most severe in the northern hardwoods type. Next in importance: aspen, swamp conifers, white pine and swamp hardwoods.
- Most damaging effects of deer on the forest are: inadequate stocking of trees, poor tree quality, and undesirable species composition.
- Damage occurs during all seasons of the year in many areas, which shows a deteriorating situation. However, most damage occurs during the winter yarding period when deer are concentrated.

• In the opinion of the cooperators, the herd should be:

- (a) reduced in 29 deer management units in the north; (b) reduced in 5 management units in

the central counties, and (c) increased in parts of 5 units in the north.

- Many forest managers indicated that present timber management plans will have to be altered (some drastically) unless some relief from deer damage is forthcoming.

- Many forest owners are ready to improve access, distribute maps, plow roads, etc., in order to encourage hunters to use their lands.

- Public hunting is permitted on all lands owned by cooperators (except the Menominee Indian Reservation).

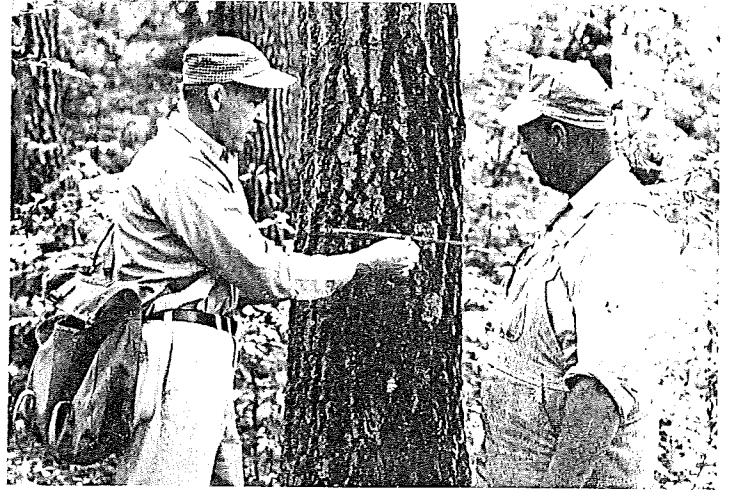
In the light of the results of the survey, the Forest Advisory Committee has recommended three items to the Conservation Commission:

a. That the Commission encourage the construction of numerous deer enclosures on all forest types on both public and private lands in order that this problem may be demonstrated more adequately to the public over a period of years.

b. That the Department work closely with those forest landowners now managing their lands on a sustained-yield basis for timber production and determine those areas within which excessive deer browsing is causing a serious economic loss.

c. That in managing the deer herd, and specifically in the setting of seasons, special consideration be given to those deer management units in which excessive browsing is causing a serious economic loss to the forest landowners concerned.

Lake trout production in Lake Superior is still declining, but not so much—a drop of only 10 per cent in 1958 compared to 40 per cent the previous two years. Stocked lake trout are helping to hold the level of production.



Bill Seybold, District Forester, Jefferson, measures the diameter of a red oak tree in the Norris Foundation Farm woods in Waukesha County in

the process of making a woodland inventory. Shown with Seybold is William Pozinski, operator of the farm.

LANDOWNERS (Cont. from page 1)

contacted 114 farmers in five southern counties and also checked the woods of each person interviewed for quality and quantity of timber and its availability for supplying the markets in the area. Questions were designed to give information that could be used for future program planning; will he only be interested in management assistance, would he consider the yearly sale of logs on a contract basis, would

he be able to do his own woods work or want to hire it done?

Examination of the farm woods revealed again the long known fact that grazing must be stopped if many of the woods are to remain in a productive state. However, even reimbursement of the cost of the fencing materials to keep out livestock interested only a portion of the farmers now grazing their woods.

New Dike Completed

At Horican Marsh, a dike for a new sub-impoundment area has been completed. Marsh manager Jim Bell and his staff will manage the new 26-acre area for waterfowl. They will plant smartweed and other preferred duck foods, and will install a pump this summer so that the area can be flooded for the fall hunting season.

Funds for the dike were obtained

through the P-R Gift Fund. The Redhead Hunting Club of Mayville, Wisconsin, donated \$250 and the state, through P-R, contributed \$750 as matching funds.

This is the second sub-impoundment area that has been completed during the winter at Horicon. The west side impoundment is larger, 300 acres, but will be managed in the same manner.

GIFT (Cont. from page 1)

one of the State's largest producers of forest products is a form of leadership in the field of natural resources cooperation". MacArthur further pointed out that, "with the development of additional small impoundments, cover manipulation, establishment of refuges and improvement of feeding conditions, the area's ability to attract and hold significant numbers of waterfowl,

snipe, woodcock, prairie grouse, ruffed grouse, deer and other game species will be assured".

Commissioner Rahr of Manitowoc said that the gift "would be one of far reaching importance through generations to come. Nothing Mr. Mead could have done would have more significance and value to the citizens of the State of Wisconsin."

Quoted by Mr. Mead