

## Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed H. R. 11537 - Conservation on military and other Federal lands which extends and expands the authority for carrying out wildlife conservation and rehabilitation programs on military lands, and authorizes the implementation of such programs on certain public lands.

Under present law, the Secretary of Defense is authorized to carry out programs on military reservations for the conservation and rehabilitation of wildlife under cooperative agreements with the Secretary of the Interior and appropriate State wildlife agencies. The program includes authority to issue special hunting permits and collect fees for such permits which must be expended in accordance with the cooperative wildlife program agreements. However, Defense's appropriation authorization authority of \$500,000 per fiscal year for this program expired on June 30, 1972. Interior has provided technical assistance for this program, but the Department has never had direct appropriation authority for it.

Title I of H. R. 11537 will reinstate the appropriation authorization for the cooperative wildlife program on military reservations as described above and expand its coverage to include Interior. Accordingly, for fiscal years 1973 through 1978 annual appropriations will be authorized of not to exceed \$1,500,000 and \$2,000,000 for the Secretaries of Defense and the Interior, respectively.

Title II of H. R. 11537 will require the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to establish, in cooperation with State wildlife agencies, programs for the conservation and rehabilitation of wildlife. Generally, such programs will be carried out on two types of land: (1) Interior -- areas under jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management; and, (2) Agriculture -- units of the National Forest System. In addition, Interior, with the written consent of the participating agencies, will be required to undertake such cooperative wildlife programs on lands under the jurisdiction of (1) the Atomic Energy Commission, and (2) the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Under title II, State wildlife agencies can enter into cooperative agreements with Interior and/or Agriculture which include provisions for the issuance of "public land area management stamps" that will be required for anyone hunting, fishing, or trapping on lands subject to such a cooperative agreement. Net fees collected for these stamps will be earmarked to carry out conservation and rehabilitation programs on the lands covered by the agreement.

Civil and criminal penalties can be imposed upon individuals who hunt, fish, or trap without the required stamp and violator's equipment could also be subject to forfeiture. In this regard, Agriculture and Interior employees will be given certain law enforcement authorities. None of the requirements under title II of H. R. 11537 will affect relevant Indian rights or existing State or Federal jurisdiction to regulate those rights.

Title II will authorize annual appropriations for fiscal years 1974 through 1978 of \$10,000,000 each for Interior and Agriculture.

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