

CONSERVATION NEWS AND NOTES

Walter Elwood, Chairman,
Conservation Committee

The outstanding conservation program featured last Spring by Elmira College, at Elmira, N.Y. has an interesting write-up in the October, 1950, issue of Nature Magazine. How the modern dance was used in this program is also described in the current issue of American Forests. "The Plow That Broke the Plains", both the original music and recitative of this famous documentary film, provided the inspiration for the dance group. (And a mystery is solved).

"Warning to North Americans" is the timely title of Antoon de Vos's article in the Sept. - Oct. issue of Audubon Magazine. What the ever-mounting pressure of population increase has done to every form of wildlife in the Netherlands is graphically brought out; birds, small mammals, wild flowers are rapidly becoming non-existent as their habitats are being more and more claimed by man.

This is in line with the urgent appeal made to our member clubs, by Richard H. Pough, Curator of Conservation in the American Museum of Natural History, who has been imploring our clubs to save here and there, little areas of natural habitats, untampered with, before it is too late, as living museum exhibits of the America that was.

Mr. Pough is chairman of the Island Beach National Monument Committee, a group which is trying to raise funds to purchase the last bit of natural unspoiled shore on the New Jersey coast, a 22,000-acre peninsula between Seaside Park and Barnegat Bay. (See Nature Magazine for October).

The Jackson Hole Monument headache has been settled--after twenty years of controversy. This Monument has been consolidated with the Grand Teton National Park. Included in the consolidation are the thirty-some thousand acres of Rockefeller land bought by the philanthropist to provide winter feeding grounds for the hard-pressed Yellowstone elk herd. The thorny problem of taxes for Teton County has apparently been straightened out to the County's satisfaction.

The bill to provide a refuge for the little Florida Key deer was withdrawn at the last moment before Congress adjourned. It is still, however, on the calendar for action when Congress reconvenes.

The bill to protect the Bald Eagle in Alaska passed the House but was not reported out of the Senate Committee. (Special Ed. Note)--Due to President calling Special Session, Nov. 27, Bill H.R. 5507 can be brought out of Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee for action by the Senate. Write or telegraph Senator Edwin C. Johnson, Chairman urging its passage. Do this today!

The California War Memorial Park Association which has battled so long and so hard to save the famous sugar pines in Tuolumne and Calaveras Counties is still fighting. The Pickering Lumber Company which owns the pines is opposed to the purchase, even though only 369 acres, a mere fraction of its vast holdings, is effected. Congressman Holifield of California, chairman of a House group fighting to preserve the sugar pines, has called for a Senate probe. He has unearthed some interesting facts; namely, that the Pickering Lumber Company obtained a \$2,500,000 loan from the RFC back in 1936 and that shortly thereafter three new members appeared on the Board of Directors and, by some strange coincidence, these new directors were all recent RFC officials.

Miss Brush of our Federation's Conservation Committee provided us with this illuminating example of what a powerful business-politics partnership can do to a mere conservation issue. Miss Brush, incidentally, visited several National and State Parks and National Monuments in California during her stay in those parts this Spring.

Your chairman spent several weeks in Mexico this summer and saw with his own eyes our neighbor's terrific conservation problems, and how well William Vogt had described them in his "Road to Survival."

When the New York State legislature convenes in 1951, our Federation Bird Clubs will have their work cut out for them again in protecting our Forest Preserve and in seeing to it that the New York State Constitution is upheld.

The bill banning Panther Mountain Dam was passed, but the bill declaring a moratorium on all Adirondack reservoirs for one year was vetoed and the bill to require a referendum of the people on the construction of Adirondack reservoirs was defeated in Assembly Committee.

Hearings are still being held in various parts of the State on this issue of building flood control and power dams in the Forest Preserve, to form the basis of a report to the 1951 legislature.

Unfortunately, the Secretary of the Interior has authorized the Bureau of Reclamation to build the Echo Park and Split Mountain Dams in the Dinosaur National Monument, a project strongly opposed by conservation organizations throughout the land. Our only hope lies in the fact that the 207 million dollars needed for the job has still to be appropriated by Congress and we can still express opinions to our congressmen.

The Budget Bureau has just announced a 500 million dollar cut in non-defense appropriations, a bigger cut than Congress ordered. In this reduction are included \$56,950,000 for the reclamation and power-marketing agencies and 50 million dollars for the Army engineers civil activities.

A bloc of western congressmen are all for these power developments, being egged on by the Bureau of Reclamation, the Army engineers and private concerns; but there is a ray of hope, perhaps, in the appropriation cuts.

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