

Like every refuge where deer exist, they became a problem. The area has been open to gunners on 3 occasions, first in 1950 when they harvested 359 deer, and again in 1952 and 1955 when a total of 305 more were removed. Since 1955, archers have had an annual hunt under careful control and have brought the total number of deer removed to over 1,000. It is presently estimated that the deer herd numbers around 100, a much more reasonable figure than what existed in 1950 when $3\frac{1}{2}$ times that were actually removed. One trained in reading the story of deer from signs left on the vegetation can still see the deer line on the apple and other favored trees, dating back to the old refuge days.

Future plans for Howland Island will continue to stress the waterfowl program. Controlled hunting will be needed to keep the deer herd in check. Agricultural activities will continue to furnish feed for local and migrating waterfowl and grain for other needs of the Conservation Department. In line with present thinking of multiple use of all state lands, the public is encouraged to enjoy the pleasures of observing wildlife on this interesting area.

For those in more distant sections of the state, a trip to Howland Island can be conveniently combined with one to the Fish & Wildlife Service's Montezuma Waterfowl Refuge, a scant 10 miles away.

District Game Manager, 21 Clinton Ave., Cortland.

CONSERVATION NEWS

MAXWELL C. WHEAT, JR.

Forest Preserve: After you have vigorously attacked a conservation bill for offering too little protection, you are likely to slap a hand against your mouth as if to cry "what have I done?" when you hear a developer jump to his feet to whack at the same measure for providing too much sanctuary.

The developers, worried that they may not be able to gain eventual access to all the Forest Preserve, are condemning the bill that would set aside two thirds for possible multiple use leaving the rest as wilderness. They charge that the bill is just for the few who are willing to "play at being an Indian". Yet many conservationists have praised it for leaving some lands in the Adirondacks and Catskills that would be recognized by the old Iroquois. So all this would seem to leave you in that proverbial 'foot in mouth' predicament.

Except that the bill, introduced by Assemblyman Robert Watson Pomeroy, chairman of the Joint Legislative Committee on Conservation, has been obscured by a cloud of confusion and misconception.

For one thing, many assume it will be several years before the bill can possibly be passed. Not so! Many think that the wilderness areas to be set aside will be "new". Not so! It is becoming a widely held view that the Preserve's chief function has come to be that of recreation. Absolutely not so!

If you are able to ascertain the correct basis on which to form your attitude you may wish to testify at one of the public hearings yet to be held: 8 p. m., December 8, State Office Building, Buffalo: 1:30, Dec. 9, Country Squire Motel, Rochester: 3:30, January 11, American Museum of Natural History, New York City: 1:30, Jan. 13 Assembly Chamber, Albany. Those wishing to testify can apply to Mr. Pomeroy's committee, care of the Assembly Chamber, Albany.

What has caught many of us by surprise is the fact that the measure can be given final approval at the legislative session this winter. One would have thought that such an important proposal would have required amendment of the 'forever wild' clause of the state constitution which has safeguarded the Preserve all these years. This would have necessitated the longer, more cautious process culminating in voter approval.

Proponents have been able to avoid this by presenting the bill as something of

an interpretation rather than an alteration of the constitution. However, the opening of two thirds of the Preserve to the possible development of concentrated recreational facilities and perhaps for other uses would seem to siphon off considerable meaning from the words 'forever wild'.

A lot of people have been supporting this so-called "Wilderness Bill" because they think it is going to protect areas that heretofore have not been protected. On the contrary, the 16 proposed "wilderness areas" are portions of the Preserve and already protected as 'forever wild'. They cannot be assigned any more protection than that. The bill's opponents assert that it is a question of enforcement under this authority.

The bill's supporters argue that they need the designation of the 16 areas for purposes of enforcement. Apparently they feel they could then concentrate their efforts on halting the "invasion" of these wilderness lands with jeeps, tractors, aircraft, boats, and "doodlebugs". But it must be remembered that the other purpose of the bill is to allow use of much of the Preserve for more 'civilized' recreation facilities. I question whether there could be enough manpower left over from policing picnic grounds to patrol the wilderness lands.

Furthermore, what guarantee is there that the legislators will not reduce these wilderness areas in future years? If the precedent is established for them to draw lines around certain areas in the Preserve and call them "wilderness areas", what is to prevent the law makers from later drawing the lines tighter until there is nothing left of the wilderness except bits and scraps?

Joseph A. Blake, Jr., chairman of the Federation conservation committee, holds little hope for the wilderness under this zoning proposal. "I fear," he declares, "that in spite of special protection, the wilderness areas will not remain 'wilderness' very long. Tinned tagged trails and opened camps will be constructed for the convenience of those penetrating these areas. Roads will be constructed, ostensibly for fire protection. But they will be used by hunters, because of strong political pressure if for no other reason. In short, I have no doubt that politics will destroy the 900,000 acres set aside as wilderness within a few years at the most."

Mr. Blake further points out that "The Forest Preserve was established primarily for watershed protection, not primarily for recreation." A former New York Commissioner of Conservation, Sharon J. Mauhs of Cobleskill, has asserted that "the legislature ought to reject any bill which says that the primary use of the Forest Preserve is recreation." This is exactly what the bill says.

For one thing, Mr. Mauhs doubted that the Preserve could become the center of outdoor recreation in the state as has been implied. He cited the 88 other state parks plus the myriads of man-hours devoted to boating and salt water fishing outside the Preserve.

But more crucially he asserted "The most important reason for protecting these wilderness areas, is that by so doing, we preserve a great water resource . . . That it has and continues to accomplish its basic purpose of watershed protection is shown by the fact that the rivers of the state, which take their rise in the Preserve, continue to flow as copiously and to fulfill their part in public welfare as they did a hundred years ago. There are few states in America which can say as much about their own water courses."

He had in mind two vital rivers nourished by the Preserve, the Hudson and Delaware. The former is fed by the Mohawk River rising in the Adirondacks then flowing south and the Schoharie issuing from the Catskills but going north. The Delaware, which drains the western area of the Catskill Preserve is important to the people of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware. Mr. Mauhs also cited the 8 million persons in New York City besides those in other communities whose water supply depends on the water storage capacities of the Preserve.

"Earlier civilizations", Mr. Mauhs declared, "which have passed away, lost too many forests such as this one. People all over the world are paying, and will for centuries continue to pay, a tragically high price for the loss of their watershed forests."

Golden Eagle: Legislation to protect the Golden Eagle failed to get out of committee this year. Efforts to get it passed will be renewed when Congress meets in 1962. The bill introduced in the Senate and co-sponsored by Senator Kenneth B. Keating of New York would amend the Bald Eagle Act of 1940 to include protection of the Golden Eagle. Companion bills have been introduced in the House

by Representatives John Dingell of Michigan, Silvio O. Conte of Massachusetts and Peter H. Dominick of Colorado. New Yorkers could help effectively now by writing their Congressmen in the House of Representatives.

National Wilderness Bill: You could also add a plug for the Bill to Establish a National Wilderness Preservation System. By some miracle this bill passed the Senate and now awaits action in the House. Do not confuse the intent of the Federal "Wilderness Bill" with that of the state's. The Federal bill would provide 'forever wild' protection to government owned wilderness areas whereas the state bill would essentially reduce the acreage so protected.

Great Horned Owl: Removal of the Great Horned Owl from the list of birds protected in New York State was urged in a resolution approved at the 20th annual. The council also recommended an open season on Mourning Doves.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.
New York City

SEPT. 29 — OCT. 1

Minutes of the Council Meeting (Condensed)

The fourteenth annual meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc., was called to order by the President, Mrs. William G. Irving, at 9:50 a. m. The meeting was held in the Roosevelt Memorial Lecture Room of the American Museum of Natural History. Twenty-eight delegates representing 19 clubs answered the roll call.

The minutes of the 1960 Council meeting were read and accepted.

Mrs. Dayton Stoner, Treasurer, read her report for the year Jan 1, 1960 to Dec 31, 1960.

Balance — Jan 1, 1960	\$ 333.37
Receipts — 1960	1,916.98
Gross total	\$2,250.35
Expenses — 1960	\$1,643.66
Balance, checking account, Dec. 31 ----	\$ 606.69
Balance, savings account, Dec. 31	900.00

The proposed budget for 1962, totaling \$1,905, was also presented by Mrs. Stoner. It was accepted by the Council.

Reports of appointed committees:

Kingbird Finance

Following the resignation of Mr. Winston Brockner as chairman of the committee, Mr. Alfred Starling has assumed the chairmanship. The committee expects to contact each member club of the Federation in the near future to create local interest in finding advertisers for the *Kingbird*.

Conservation

Mr. Joseph A. Blake, Jr., chairman, related the two areas of Federal legislation that are of interest to members: (a) The Wilderness Bill, which has now passed the Senate and awaits action by the House of Representatives. It was suggested that letters of support from individual members to their representatives would be of value. (b) The protection of the Golden Eagle — proposed legislation which is framed as an amendment to the law