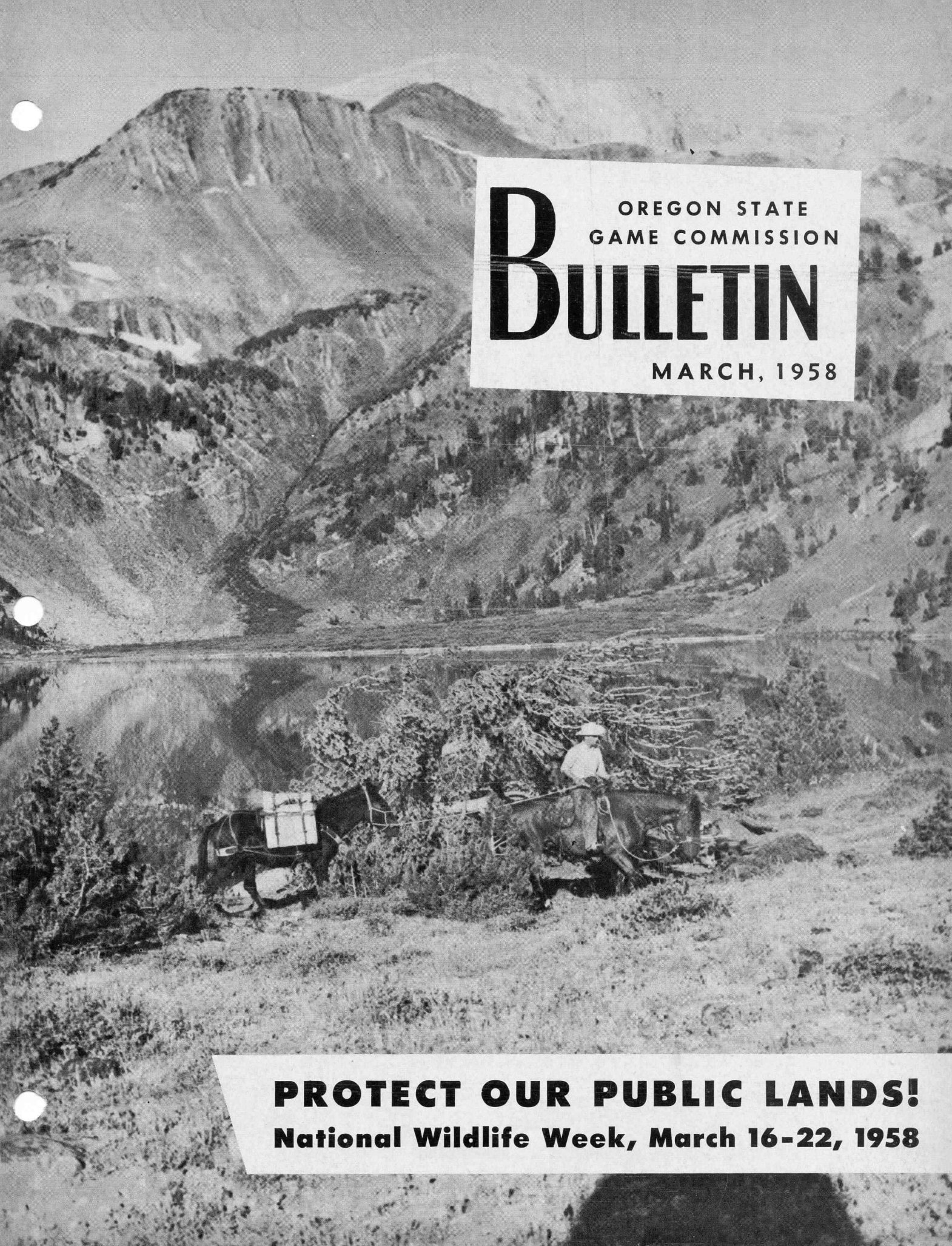

OREGON STATE GAME COMMISSION BULLETIN

MARCH, 1958

PROTECT OUR PUBLIC LANDS!

National Wildlife Week, March 16-22, 1958

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BULLETIN

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At the present time the Bulletin is circulated free of charge to anyone forwarding a written request.

the cover

Oregon's mountains and forests are largely in public ownership and are a source of recreation to thousands of persons each year. This scene is in the high Wallowas, a favorite area for those who enjoy the combination of fine scenery, horseback riding, camping, and fishing or hunting. (Photo by Milt Guymon)

Red Hat Days—1957

THE YEAR 1957 marked the third year of Red Hat Days in Oregon. This is the program identified with the outdoorsman's pledge which reads:

I give my pledge
To be law abiding
To respect the rights and property of others
To be careful with firearms.

Has it been worthwhile? Yes, let's look at the record for 1957. Of major concern has been the problem of hunter misconduct associated with killing and wounding of livestock, trespassing, littering, damage to equipment, and a host of other irritations and downright acts of vandalism. This kind of activity has been responsible largely for the closure of much privately owned land to hunting. One of the most informative surveys on this problem has been made by the Oregon Cattlemen's Association. The first survey, made following the 1956 hunting season, revealed an alarming total of more than 100 domestic animals killed or wounded by hunters. Some of these were not verified but in any event if the actual total was anywhere near that number, it is a disgraceful situation. But what happened in 1957? A similar survey showed only 13 domestic animals killed or wounded by hunters. The improvement is almost unbelievable but those are the figures. This association further reports far fewer complaints in 1957.

A random sample of reports from Red Hat Days county chairmen discloses that hunter conduct was improved noticeably in 1957 over the previous year. There were areas where there seemed to be no improvement but this was the exception rather than the rule. Although reports from the Oregon State Police were not quite as optimistic, in general, game enforcement officers reported improved hunter conduct. As in 1956 an area in which hunter conduct was not up to par was in the central Oregon district. But the sum total of all reports reveals marked improvement in hunter conduct in 1957 with far fewer cases of outright vandalism.

What has been the hunter fire record? The Bureau of Indian Affairs reported no fires were caused by hunters on either the Warm Springs or the Umatilla Reservation and that only one small spot fire was caused by hunters in the Klamath Reservation in 1957. The Bureau of Land Management had a half dozen reports of fire caused by deer hunters. The six fires burned some 600 acres of grass, brush and woodland. They reported that they were not badly hurt by hunter fires. The regional office of the U. S. Forest Service reported a total of 21 fires which burned 23.5 acres. Eighteen of these fires occurred in eastern Oregon forests. The State Forestry Department reported 31 hunter fires which burned an area of 1,203 acres. The majority of these occurred in western Oregon. Three of the fires in western Oregon were difficult to control and actually cost more than $27,000 to suppress. Keep Oregon Green Association says in their fire report for 1957 season: "It is significant that in spite of increased use of our forest lands by hunters, campers, fishermen, picnickers, and sightseers that there has not been a corresponding increase in the number of man-caused fires." They acknowledge the assistance given by the Red Hat Days program. Yes, thoughtless and careless hunters did cause some fires in 1957 as they did in 1956 and in previous years. Hunters cannot be proud of the record on this score but they can be proud of the improvement that is being made.

In the category of gun accidents the picture is one of improvement. The following table shows the number of firearms accidents associated with hunting in the past three years:

	1955	1956	1957
Fatal firearm accidents	10	9	7
Nonfatal firearm accidents	47	36	28

A definite downward trend in the number of firearms accidents is indicated.

(Continued on Page 8)

1958 WATERFOWL COUNT

Oregon had 638,463 waterfowl of 25 species tallied during the period from January 4 to 10 when employees of the Game Commission and the Fish and Wildlife Service conducted the annual winter inventory. The count included: 567,228 ducks (203,000 mallards); 45,490 geese; 2,778 brant; 17,181 coot; and 5,786 swans. The total was about 73,000 less than in 1957 but considerably more than the five-year average of 500,000.

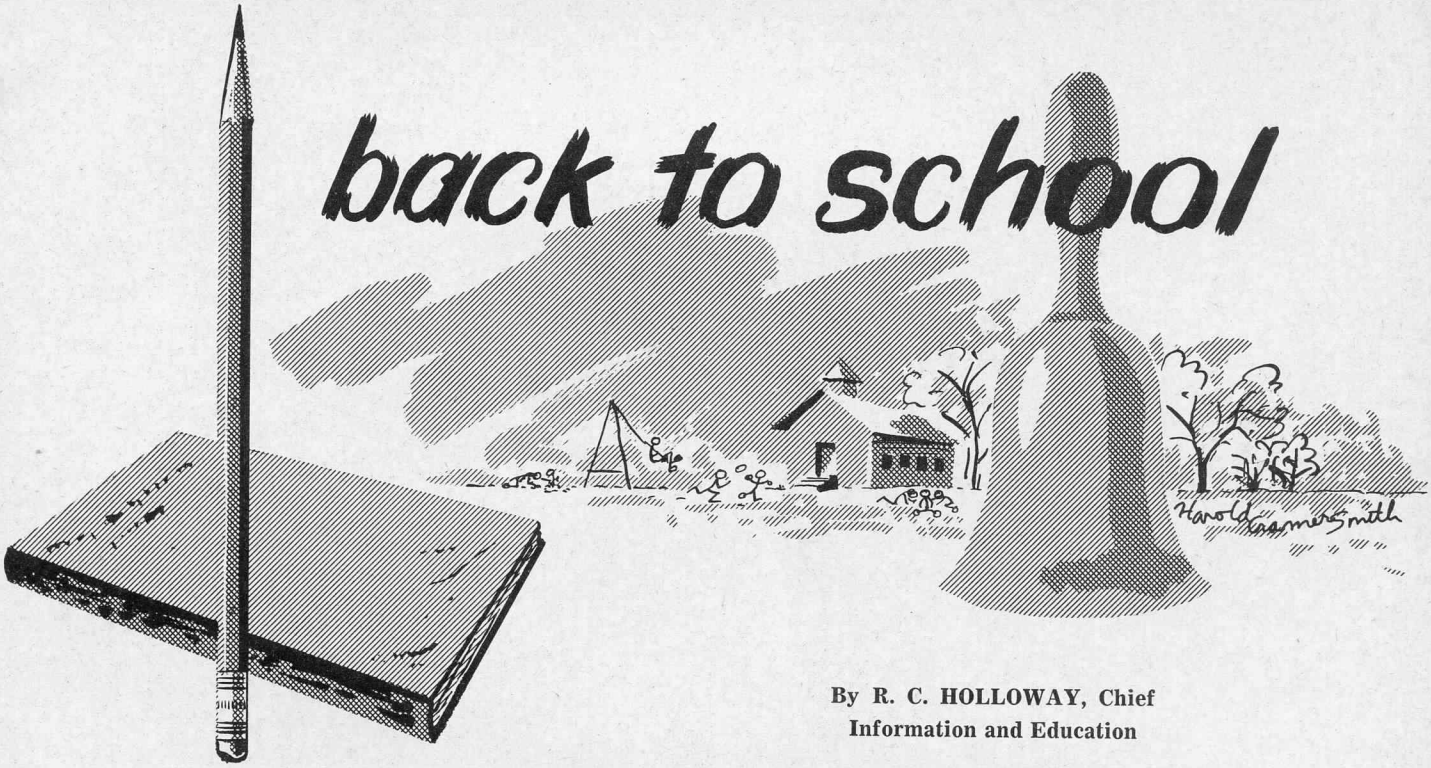
FIRST TWO SUPERVISED BIG GAME HUNTS HELD

Only eight elk were taken during the two supervised big game hunts held February 1 and 2 to reduce damage to agricultural lands.

One hunt was held near Shaw mountain in Union county. There 15 hunters managed to bag 5 elk before the herd of some 35 animals scattered. The animals taken were 2 cows, 2 calves, and 1 bull.

At Sitkum in Coos county, 3 elk were taken from a band of 13 animals by 6 hunters. All three were cow elk, including the leader of the herd.

Because of the small number of animals taken and because weather conditions would not permit driving the animals far from the damage areas, it appears doubtful that desired results were obtained from either hunt. Both hunts were closely supervised by personnel of the Game Commission and State Police.



By R. C. HOLLOWAY, Chief
Information and Education

SCHOOL BELLS rang again recently for some 150 game commission staff and field personnel. Armed with notebook and pencil and a desire to learn, these men gathered at the Boy Scout Leaders Training Center near Portland for a three-day session of "book-larnin." This was the latest in a series of annual staff schools which highlight the in-service training program of the commission.

A recent bulletin article discussed the over-all quality of the people who work for the commission and emphasized the "high morale and devotion to duty" characteristic of commission employees. One of the many reasons for this is the opportunity provided to employees to "grow" on the job. The annual staff training school offers a most rewarding opportunity for an employee to expand his vista, to acquire information and to learn techniques that will help him perform his job more satisfactorily.

In-service training schools are, of course, not a new development. They have been a part of personnel training for a great many years. Our own training session is designed to fit our needs, to equip our men more ably for the assignments which they must perform. If you don't think commission employees perform a variety of assignments, spend a week or even a day with one of the field agents sometime. Versatility is characteristic of a field man's activity. They, most assuredly, must be "jacks of all trades." And so, instruction at the training school covers a wide variety of subjects.

It isn't just "birds and bees" about which the men learn at the school, and they don't have an opportunity to read many text books either. As a matter of fact, the instruction and discussions are real down to earth, with all the frills removed. It has to be that way because a lot of learning must be packed into those three days. They don't stop with learning how to identify aquatic plants or how to use statistics in estimating wildlife populations. They also learn how to be better speakers, better writers, better supervisors and above all, better employees.

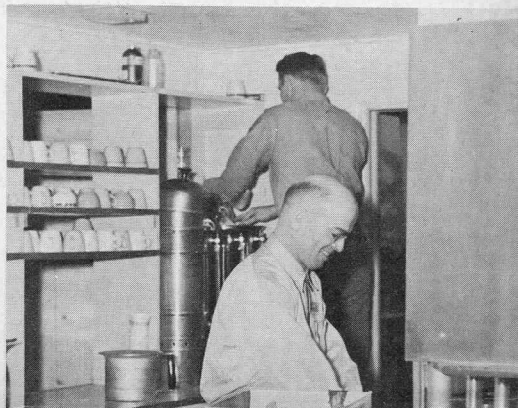
But let's get down to cases; just how does such a school operate? First of all, it takes a good deal of preparation. The school chairman finds he has a job on his hands similar to that of a college registrar only on a smaller scale. Students must be assigned to classes. Each person who attends may take two courses, each of six hours' duration. He may make his choices from a selection of at least twelve subjects in which instruction is to be given. Occasionally an employee must be assigned to a third, fourth or possibly a fifth choice because of conflicts in class schedule. An employee is asked not to repeat the course that he has taken at a previous training session. The number of personnel assigned to a class may vary from 10 to 40.

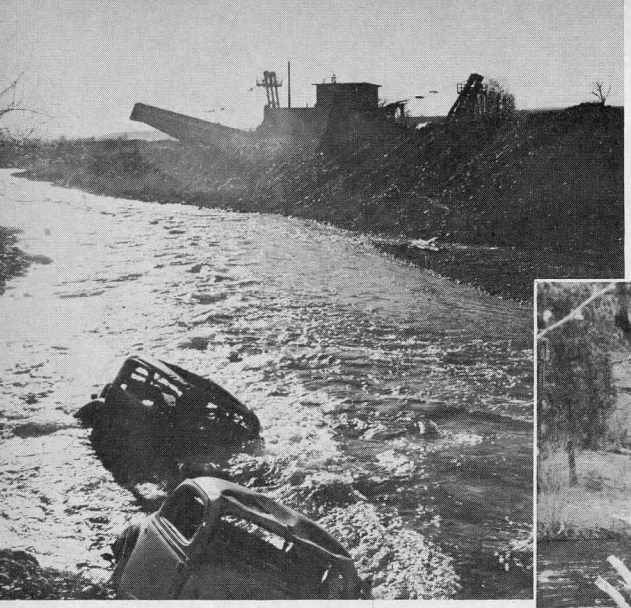
What kinds of courses are offered? Here are a few of them: aquatic plant identification, public speaking, wildlife statistics, law enforcement, supervision, letter and report writing, and real estate transactions.

You might ask, "Why on earth must game commission employees know anything about real estate matters?" That's an interesting question and, certainly, involvement in real estate matters would seem far removed from the business of managing fish and game. But here's the answer. The commission owns more than 40,000 acres of land and administers by lease or other agreement several thousand additional acres. These lands are used for headquarters, public shooting grounds, big game ranges, waterfowl management areas, for public access and for other uses. The administration of these lands has become so important that a recent reorganization within the commission brought about the creation of a separate lands department.

(Continued on Page 6)

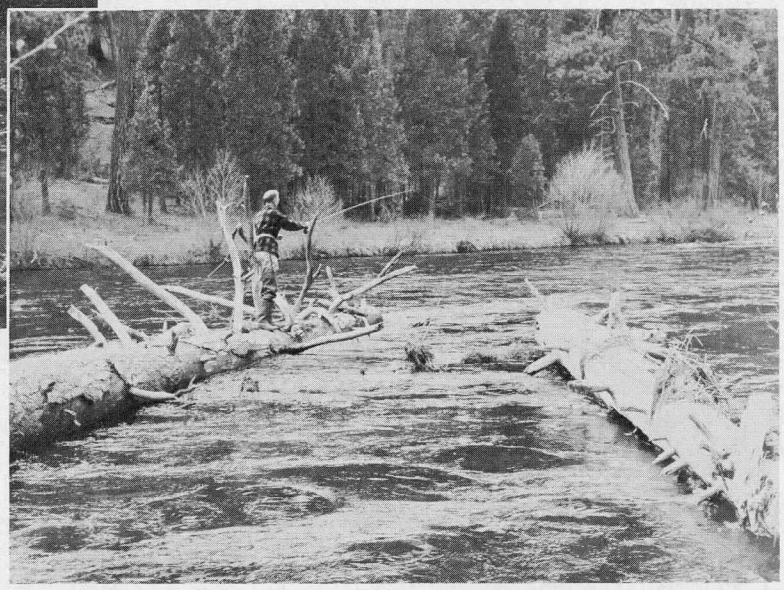
Besides attending classes, the men had to do all the chores except cooking.





Pollution, whatever the kind, is still a national disgrace. Dredge mining and other kinds of pollution have made a biological desert out of many waters.

A clear mountain stream, unspoiled by man, provides an unmatched source of peace and relaxation.



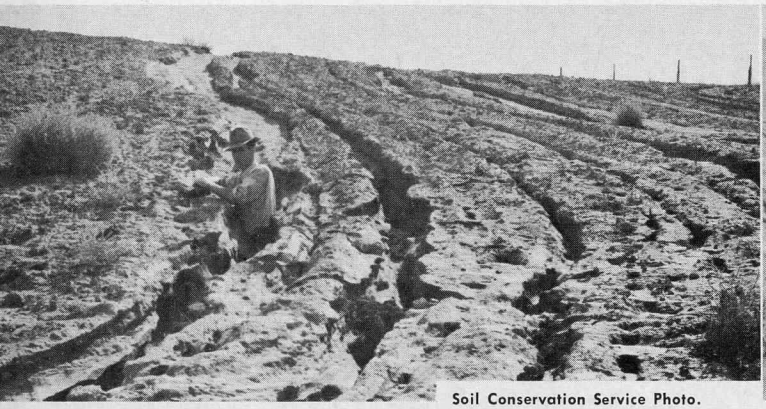
PROTECT OUR PUBLIC LANDS!

National Wildlife Week, March 16-22, 1958

The public lands, over one-quarter of the nation's area, belong to us and our neighbors and to all of the people of the United States. Held in trust by local, state and federal governments, these lands are rich in resources, diverse in meeting our wants for water, minerals, timber, grass and recreation. One of the greatest of our heritages, they are an ingredient of American living that we wish to save.

The public domain has become a part of us, just as kinship with the wilderness was a part of those earlier generations of Americans who settled our country. It is to this that many of us must turn for a little of the feeling that comes from living "close to the land" in the out-of-doors. These lands also provide a diversity of the material things so essential to living in this modern age.

But just as we have grown to value the many benefits of this public estate, so must we begin to assume a greater responsibility for taking care of the land itself—the soils, water, minerals, plants, animals, scenery and wilderness. Our use must be keyed to a basic concern for these resources so that they can continue to satisfy our wants in the face of rapidly increasing pressures upon them.



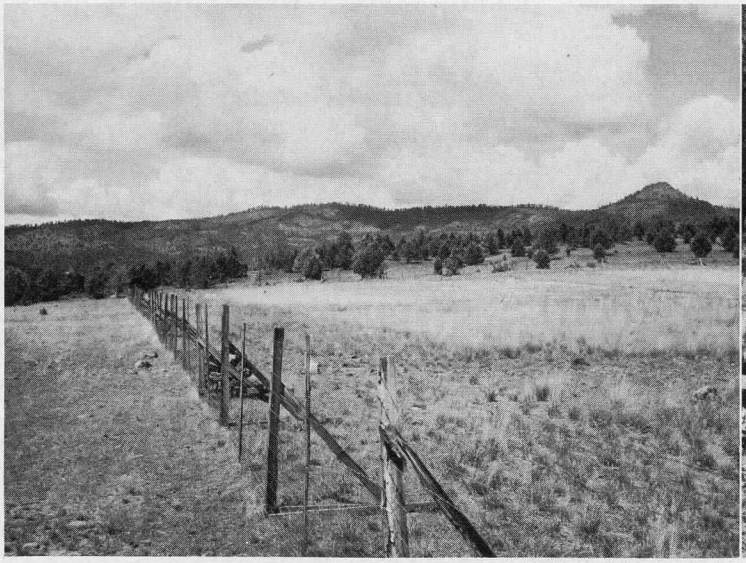
Soil Conservation Service Photo.

Nations have fallen as a result of abuse of the land. Cloudburst caused these four-foot gullies.

Wise land use maintains soil fertility and minimizes land and water erosion.

Fire destroys everything in its path, the vegetation, the wildlife, even the soil.

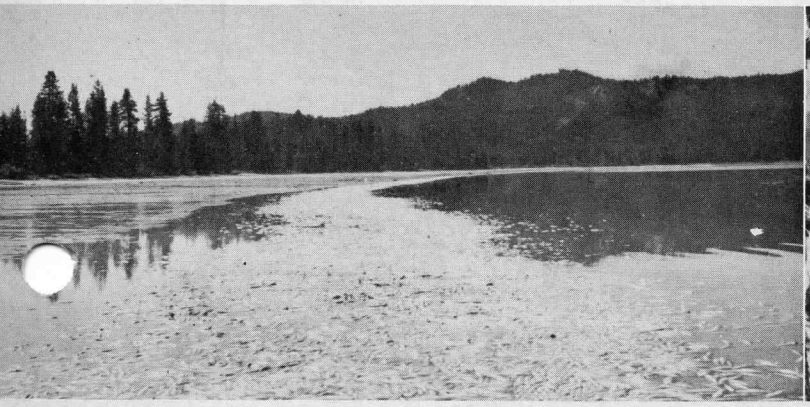
Proper timber management assures crops for the future and conserves soil and water.



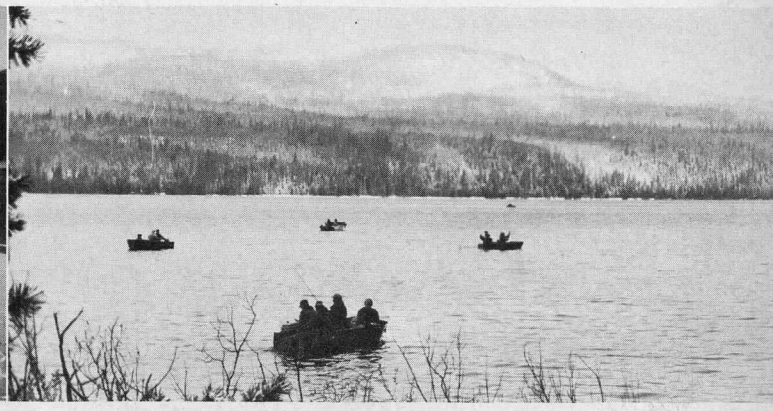
Soil Conservation Service Photo.

Overgrazing, as on the left in the above picture, can seriously damage the forage value of our public lands.

Livestock and big game numbers must be left in balance with the supply of forage. Hunting seasons are designed to assist in accomplishing this.



A lake infested with trash fish provides little or no recreation to fishermen.



There is no better way of relaxation than fishing as shown here on Oregon's famed Diamond Lake.

Class in game management listens to lecture by Bob Mace, chief of big game.

back to school

(Continued from Page 3)

Many employees of the commission occasionally become involved in a limited degree in some kind of land negotiation. A knowledge of real estate laws and instruments used in recording various kinds of land transactions is most helpful. The course offered at the training school is designed to assist employees to carry out this part of their responsibility.

What about law enforcement, isn't that a function of the Oregon State Police? True, but the majority of commission field employees are deputized and they do quite a lot of enforcement work. It is essential that they have a basic knowledge of enforcement techniques and court procedures.

Why do commission employees have to know something about public speaking? Well, the answer is pretty obvious but perhaps there are many who don't realize the amount of public speaking that is done by commission personnel. Actually, this is one of their important functions. Commission personnel may be called upon to speak to as many as 75 groups in one month. Speaking engagements are not confined to headquarters and staff personnel; field agents carry a major share of the load. How they present their material to the public is of utmost importance. Expert instruction at the training schools helps the men to perform this function more ably.

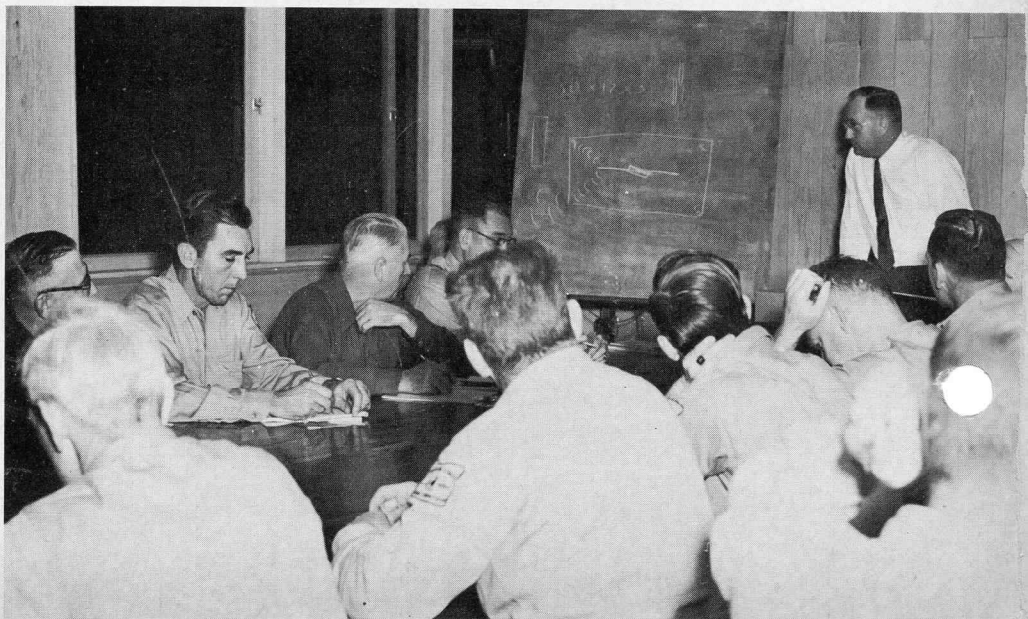
Of more obvious purpose is a course in fish diseases and nutrition. Instruction and discussion in this class is particularly important because of the fact that production of fish is the most expensive single activity in which the commission engages. Means of reducing the costs and of improving the quality of the product are sought continuously. The class also serves as a valuable forum for ideas and suggestions of our own personnel. Many of the modern techniques used in our own fish hatcheries, some of which have been adopted elsewhere, were developed by our own personnel.

One of the most popular classes at the recent training session was labeled, "Commission History and Policies." This involved, primarily, a review of commission operations, policies and organization from the turn of the century to the present time. You might ask, "How's that kind of information going to produce any more fish and game?" Well, maybe it won't directly. It does, however, give employees a far better insight into the organization for which they are working and enables them to evaluate present day work in comparison with operations fifteen, twenty-five and thirty-five years ago. They gain a much better understanding of the evolution through which fish and game management has passed over the years.

Getting back to the mechanics of the schools, as indicated above, an employee is assigned to two classes. These classes occupy the afternoon hours each day. The morning hours are devoted to general sessions, one on fish management, the other on game management. These are chairmanned by staff technicians and supervisors. Game technicians may attend the fishery session or the fishery biologists may sit in with the game boys to learn more about the game management side of the picture. These meetings offer an excellent opportunity for participants to contribute from their own experiences and to learn of new techniques, new programs, new kinds of equipment, and new ideas. General sessions are helpful, particularly to the non-professional personnel. A man assigned to the maintenance of fish screens may learn about the work of a big game biologist or about the problems of rearing fish in a hatchery. This gives him a better understanding of the over-all operations of the commission. It helps him to relate his particular job to the entire operation. He learns that although he may be working on some assignment in the remote corner of the state that he has a key role in the entire management program. This principle applies to each and every employee, regardless of his position. One of the major rewards is that each man who attends the school returns to his assignment better fitted

(Continued on Page 7)

This group gets pointers in law enforcement from Captain Irving Larson, head of the Game Division of the State Police.



back to school

(Continued from Page 6)

to deal with the public with whom he may come in contact. He knows more about commission operations. He knows more of the answers to the many questions that are put to him by an interested public.

Because of the limited time available, class instruction is condensed to the point where only the most necessary ingredients are included. Boiling down the instruction in any one of these courses to six hours is a real job and tests the ingenuity of the instructor. They get right to the heart of the matter. Class members must be on their toes at all times. An example of concentrated instruction is that given in the class titled, "Report and Letter Writing." This class is taught by an outstanding professional in the field. He pares away all trivia and aims dead center at common writing errors. Brevity and conciseness are the cardinal rules of writing that he stresses. He "squeezes the air" out of writing. Class members criticize their own and each other's writings, in fact this portion of the class session can become quite lively. The usual reaction is, "Why wasn't I doing it this way before?"

Employees who take the course in supervision learn how to plan, direct and coordinate work. They learn something of the techniques of good human relations and how best to get along with fellow workers. They learn about the proper techniques to assist in solving worker problems and how to take corrective action. No, perhaps you cannot teach a person how to be a good supervisor in just six hours. You can, however, lay a sound foundation for further development toward this objective.

The men who attend the training session represent a cross section of commission field activities and staff responsibilities. They range in age from the early twenties to the middle sixties. Some have had a great deal of formal education, others have had little. Some have been with the commission for more than 35 years, others are new on the job. In spite of this wide disparity in age, education, and experience, all of them fit nicely into the training session activities.

How many times have you heard the expression, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." Believe me, you can; the "old dogs" in our organization will be the first to admit it. It is a gratifying experience to see the older employees pitch into the class work routine. And the new boys, the ones just out of school, pick up a lot of information from the fellows who have been on the firing line for a long, long time.

The men are on the go from early in the morning until late in the evening. It has to be that way in order to use profitably the time available. In addition to classes, the men do all the work except cooking of meals. Training films are shown in the evening periods. The men do have an opportunity to relax, however, and cries of "I'll raise you" are heard until the wee hours of the morning. These are the times when you can really get acquainted with fellow employees whom you may not see again for another year.

There are many profitable end results of schooling of this kind. Not the least of these is a more efficient utilization of personnel. I mentioned earlier that commission employees are "jacks of all trades." The schooling they receive at the training session and the sharing of experiences there enables them to perform a variety of tasks more satisfactorily. They can be shifted on temporary assignment to other activities about which they have gained a basic knowledge at the training school.

It can be said without reservation that all the men learn a great deal at this training school. That is its primary purpose and it is filling that purpose remarkably well. The commission is building a stronger, more unified, more efficient organization in the process.

Our desire is to manage the resources for which we are responsible in the best possible manner and to provide the most efficient service to the people of this state. The in-service training program, of which this school is an important part, will be continued and strengthened so that these objectives may be assured.

1958 COMPOSITION SURVEY OF DEER HERDS

This winter's deer herd composition surveys show that on all black-tailed ranges the 1958 ratio of 36 bucks per 100 does is 9 per cent higher than recorded in 1957. The fawn ratio is 67 fawns per 100 does (18 per cent higher than in 1957). Altogether, 1,908 black tails were classified.

In eastern Oregon over 15,000 mule deer were classified on 56 herd ranges. The average ratio of 25 bucks per 100 does is a 22 per cent decrease from the 1957 figure and 14 per cent below the average for the last 3 years. The ratio of 79 fawns per 100 does is an increase of 16 per cent in fawn survival from 1957. Improved fawn survival is apparent in all regions, especially in the central region where the ratio increased from 59 fawns per 100 does in 1957 to 80 fawns per 100 does this year.

Waterfowl hunters on public shooting grounds fared better this year than last in spite of the fact that duck hunters generally throughout the state reported a poor to fair season. A total of 17,820 hunters on the four shooting grounds killed 39,450 birds, 35,433 ducks and 4,017 geese. This is a success ratio of 2.21 birds compared to 2.10 for 1956. By shooting grounds, results were as follows:

Shooting Ground	Hunters	Ducks	Geese	Total
Sauvies Island	9,737	19,033	108	19,141
Summer Lake	5,765	12,361	3,102	15,463
Malheur	1,413	3,457	162	3,619
Warner Valley	905	582	645	1,227
Totals	17,820	35,433	4,017	39,450

* * *

The 1957 State Police report for its game law enforcement division shows 2,946 arrests made (213 acquitted) and 2,249 warnings issued for game law violations. Fines imposed came to $110,501.53 ($13,662.50 remitted). Sentences totalled 8.81 years, of which 6.49 years were suspended.

Major number of arrests were made for violation of prohibited areas, hours or methods for angling and hunting; failure to tag game properly; angling and hunting without license; and illegal possession of game animals.

Officers also checked during the year licenses and bag limits of 141,314 resident hunters and anglers, 443 nonresidents, 283 trappers and 94 guides.

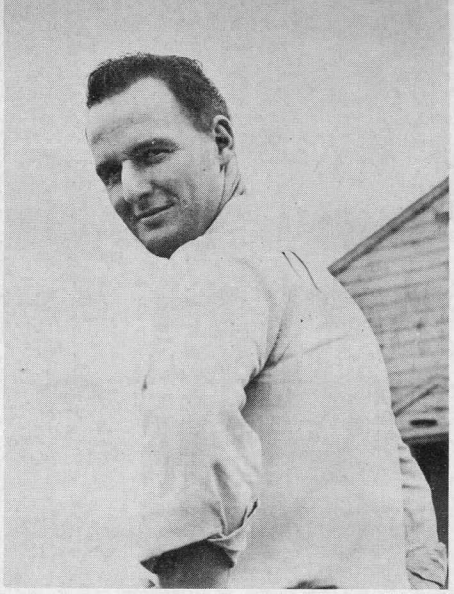
* * *

Crescent and Odell lakes were stocked with over 400,000 kokanee fry each during January. A sno-cat was used to transport the fish to Crescent lake.

* * *

Catch of a 24-inch sturgeon by an angler on the lower John Day river reported by the local state police is of special interest since it is the first official observation of the species in the John Day river.

A Day with Bob Stein ... District Game Agent



Send us a story describing a typical day with an eastern Oregon district game agent. That was the request—well let's see what might be a typical day.

Would it be a day spent counting game animals sometime between January and April? You climb out of that warm sack about 5 a.m., dress hurriedly before the icy chill of the air penetrates your marrow, fumble for a match to light the fire that begins your day. The cabin has just begun to warm up as you sit down to a breakfast of bacon, eggs, biscuits, and coffee. A couple of sandwiches and an orange are packed in the saddle bags and by 6:30 you are ready to saddle up.

It's cold this morning and the big bay doesn't like the saddle on his back one little bit, but after working the hump out of his back you are on your way. You top out on the ridge about an hour later and if you are lucky, the sun is just peaking over the horizon to warm the cold, still dawn. Your weather predictions may have gone afoul and instead of the sun to greet you there is a mixture of snow and howling north wind which numbs your cheeks as you reach the top. If it's a decent day, you start on the route which will take until dusk to cover, counting all deer and elk seen along the way.

Perhaps the "typical day" should be chosen from your "off season" time between May and September. How about a day spent measuring range and forage samples? Or maybe a trip into the high mountains to check goats or sample a lake for trout growth. Experiences trying to tag deer fawns or elk calves might be interesting too—or perhaps a day checking pheasant, quail, grouse, or chukar broods.

Actually much of your time during this period is spent working with game damage. Let's examine a typical complaint from beginning to end. End?—well, anyway, let's look at a typical complaint. Farmer Smith informs you that the "*&%#@" elk are eating his grain and the game commission hasn't done anything to stop it. You've hazed it every summer for the past several years, held two special seasons plus a certain number of cow tags during general season, not to mention a kill permit, but still the problem exists. You check the field and note the trails in the wheat and the broken fence along the edge. An inspection of the surrounding wooded area reveals quite a bit of elk sign but no elk so you will check it during the night.

You return to the field just after dark and run the spotlight back and forth over the field. The yellow reflection of two or three sets of eyes are seen in the far corner of the field with several more just beyond at the edge of the timber. You fire two rounds from the double barrel 12 gauge and listen to the fence wire sing as the animals stampede out. Two more complaints need checking tonight so you proceed on your way. You come back to Farmer Smith's field about midnight and this time you really hit the jackpot—about 35 head right in the middle of the field. You let out a sigh of resignation as you realize you are back in the hazing business.

Hunting seasons usually begin in September and continue until the last of November. Special seasons may be held anytime from August to January. Much of your time is spent assisting in law enforcement, checking to see what the success is, or supplying information to hunters. Each year one or more persons can be expected to become lost in your district and your assistance is needed in locating them. Maybe a hunter must be located to deliver a message of illness to a member of the family or even worse—death in the family. Requests for hay stack panels for protection against deer and elk are usually received about now and each one needs to be investigated.

Deer herd composition work begins during November and continues on in to December. You're busy now counting all the bucks, does and fawns you can find in order to determine what kind of fawn production has taken place and also how close the bucks were harvested.

The season of year decides what you as a game agent might be doing at any given moment. A general work plan prevails for the year. Deer must be classified as to bucks, does and fawns before the bucks lose their antlers in late December. Likewise, elk classification must be completed before the latter part of February. Big game census must be taken during the time of concentration on the winter range. Game bird broods also must be counted at a certain time.

You also make daily work plans, but find them very difficult to follow rigidly. Weather conditions are the dominant factor in determining what you might be doing on any certain day. Obviously a census route cannot be worked in a heavy snow storm or dense fog. Likewise, game birds are not easily seen on a cold, wintry, rainy day.

Each work day brings forth new experiences or different situations with a minimum of repetition. A typical day—well you decide.

Red Hat Days — 1957

(Continued from Page 2)

There are still far too many accidents. There will be far too many until we have eliminated all of them. Practically every one of them can be attributed to **plain carelessness.** Small children, some of them in the 10 to 12 year age group, are involved in a large percentage of the hunting accidents. Most of these are shotgun or .22 rifle accidents.

In summary it can be said that the Red Hat Days program has produced results — measurable results — after only three years of publicity. The Commission will surely support continuation of this program this year and in future years.

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OREGON STATE GAME COMMISSION