

Finley Says Bird Refuges To Be Saved

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Despoilation of bird refuges in the Northwest by reclamation engineers is at an end, William L. Finley, Oregon naturalist, reported today on his arrival by plane from Washington, D. C., where he took part in a conference of Secretary Ickes, J. N. Darling, chief of the biological survey, and Elwood Mead, commissioner of reclamation.

By an agreement drawn up Tuesday, Finley said, Mead has consented to respect and co-operate fully with the program of waterfowl preservation on federal reclamation projects.

FIGHT AT END

The agreement marks the end of a fight carried on by Finley over a number of years to prevent the drainage of water and cutting of cover from bird sanctuaries located on reclamation projects.

"The reclamation engineers have given no consideration to the bird refuges and we have had no recourse because they held priority right to the land," Finley explained. "With the help of Ickes, however, it has been agreed that water will not be drained off the sanctuaries except where necessary, that sheep and cattle grazing will be carefully regulated, and that dams will be built where possible to form lakes for duck breeding."

TO RESTORE LAKE

The waterfowl preserve at Clear lake, which has almost been dried up, will be restored, Finley said, and the 10,000-acre reservation at Tule lake south and east of Klamath Falls will probably be doubled in extent.

"Mead has promised the expansion of the Tule lake refuge as a sort of compensation for the previous damage done by his division," Finley said. "The chief offense was in burning the tules (bullrushes) in the spring when geese were nesting. They have agreed not to do that again."

"Also, while I was in Washington funds were approved for construction of permanent buildings at the Malheur lake refuge for the wardens and supervisors."

"Ickes has declared flatly that destruction of bird life must stop. He has been much interested in our program of preservation and believes the Southern and Eastern Oregon refuges should be developed as an intermediate resting place for waterfowl on their seasonal flights."

CRUELTY CHARGES HELD GROUNDLESS

Reclamation Project Chief
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Reclamation Project Chief Replies to Critics

KLAMATH FALLS, July 28 (Special)—B. E. Hayden, superintendent of the United States reclamation project here, hit back vigorously today at critics of wild life conditions on the project. He took exception to charges that reclamation employes have burned off grass and tule cover when the birds were nesting on Tule lake reserve, and that the Tule lake sump is to be enlarged as "a sort of compensation" for damages done by reclamationists.

The latter statement appeared in an Associated Press dispatch, quoting William L. Finley, Oregon naturalist.

"Anyone not conversant with the facts might, after reading the article, be led to believe that reclamation officials have for the past quarter of a century pursued a policy of ruthless destruction of bird life in connection with irrigation projects of the northwest," said Hayden.

Mead Statement Decried

"Nothing could be farther from the facts. No one is more interested in the propagation and protection of wild life than myself. However, if the state of Oregon is to attain its proper development and hold its place of importance it is essential that provision be made for maximum land reclamation where men as well as birds can live."

Hayden termed as "uncalled for and misleading" a statement that Dr. Elwood Mead had agreed to double the size of the Tule lake sump "as a sort of compensation for previous damage done by the division." He said each year in February or March the service has burned off the Tule growth in the sump in order to permit the flow of Lost river to spread rapidly.

FINLEY CALLED TO CONFERENCE

Commerce Forum July 27, '35
Dr. William L. Finley, who is a member of the Recreational Resources committee of the Chamber, and vice-president of J. P. Finley & Son, has been called to Washington for a conference attended by the President, officials of the biological survey and the reclamation service.

For many years Mr. Finley has devoted his time to conserving the wild life resources of Oregon. It was through his efforts that Malheur lake was originally set aside as a federal wildfowl refuge by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1908. Later the lake dried up, and is now being restored by the biological survey.

"Many of our waterfowl reservations are on reclamation projects," said Mr. Finley. "The reclamation service has accomplished some splendid results in irrigating arid lands, but their engineers have showed no interest whatever in our wild life resources. They have leased these sanctuaries to stockmen, permitting sheep and cattle to graze off the natural grass and plant life around the borders of the lakes and depriving ducks and geese of food and nesting cover. Flocks of sheep tramp through the bird colonies, destroying the eggs and young birds."

"The amount of money, about twenty cents per acre per year, which the reclamation service receives for grazing leases, in no way compensates for the damage to our wild life resources. On reclamation projects, grazing is not an essential part of supplying irrigation water to farmers."