

October 5, 1933

Mr. Charles L. Horn, President
Federal Cartridge Company,
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Horn:

I hope that you will pardon my delay in answering your letter of August 26 in which you ask me to tell you of the ruffed grouse work being carried on by Ralph T. King of the University of Minnesota. I had half expected to visit you in late September or early October, but my work has stacked up in such a way that I don't see how I can make a trip into Minnesota until winter.

Mr. King's studies related to the ecology of the ruffed grouse under natural conditions. I have kept in close touch with his investigations since they started in the spring of 1929, and have followed with particular interest the results of his work at the Cloquet forestry station. In short, King has gathered from his Cloquet area what I believe to be the most accurate ruffed grouse population figures in existence, these figures representing consecutive monthly censuses over a period of nearly three years. As the "high" of the grouse cycle approaches, this material becomes of increasing significance, and the continuation of the study through the period when the die-off comes should be of inestimable value. It is imperative that we know our grouse population densities when their cyclic peaks topple if we are to make any correlation between density and the severity and incidence of the decimating contagion. This latter is an extremely important point bearing upon possible management of cyclic species.

As I see it the studies of King and of Dr. Green are of an entirely different nature and should be kept separate, especially since the relations of these two investigators have not been free from friction. However, the fact remains that the work of both are of tremendous consequence and, irrespective of personalities, must be carried on, or the interests of science and conservation alike will suffer. Green's work seems assured of permanent status by his University, federal, and state connections but King's is in grave danger of being dropped for lack of funds unless outside parties come across with string-less contributions.

Private contributions (including the hundred dollars which I gave personally) and the little money that the extremely hard up Agricultural College was able to raise will probably suffice to keep the work going until spring; after that nobody knows. From here on some help would come in very handy.

Mr. Charles L. Horn

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Leopold and I are planning to attend the Minnesota conservation meeting in early January and hope to discuss the situation with yourself and others who might be either in a position to help or to advise us where help might be obtained. I may possibly see you before then, but I'm not making any promises, as my hands are so full at present that it is not even humorous. The Iowa program is going to take practically every bit of my time until at least the latter part of November.

Sincerely yours,

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Paul L. Errington
Asst. Prof. In Charge
Wild Life Research