

Dr. W.C. Boone  
Ottumwa Iowa

Soils Building  
March 20, 1933

Dear Dr. Boone:

In my previous letters I had "muffed" your point, but I think I now get it clearly.

Judging from the farmer-response so far, the game management idea is going to spread among farmers whether or no it is deliberately propagated by the Department.

It seems to me the wiser course to keep that spread as much as possible under the wing of the Department and the College. Law enforcement alone would indicate this course. It would be quite probable for all kinds of illegal practices to grow up if you took the attitude that pending the outcome of the demonstrations and permitted areas, the campaign of farmer-education should cease, or should be deliberately curtailed to slow up the rate of spread.

As you say, the granting of shooting privileges on these new-budding areas is quite another matter. I guess we all agree that shooting should go no further than inspection permits.

Of course a rigid inspection system cannot be spread to half the state without a technical army. My picture has always been that as experience accumulates, taper off your inspection to fit the facts. Make it very rigid at first, but if experience shows a preponderance of bona-fide operations, gradually relax the requirements until, say in five years, you simply retain the authority to inspect and close the area.

Let me repeat that I think it might be wise to give legal recognition to areas before they have qualified for shooting. Lets assume a prairie with a very thin stand but an enthusiastic group of farmers? It might take them several years to build up their birds to the density required for shooting, but during this period they might be even more deserving of recognition and technical advice than some other group with a good stand to begin with, and with no ambition to do anything more than get legal permission to harvest their crop.

With best regards

Aldo Leopold