

1532 University Avenue
November 12, 1936

Mr. John Baker
1775 Broadway
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Baker:

You have, I think, hit upon the right idea in proposing to lump the study of predator losses at Game Farms with the predator-proofing environment study.

In order to make the most of the latter subject, however, it would be to great advantage to have an area on which population measurements have already accumulated, and on part of which protective cover and food could be installed. I have just such an area at Prairie du Sac. I refer to Errington's observational area there. Incidentally the same work would have incidental value as showing whether carrying capacity can be raised by food and cover improvements. This question is, of course, almost indistinguishable from predator-proofing.

The only students I have at this moment who are qualified for this work would have to be diverted from something else. Next July 1, however, I will have two qualified students for this work, namely Mrs. Frederick Hamerstrom and Harry Anderson. Mrs. Hamerstrom has been thoroughly trained by Errington in Iowa and is intensely interested in this subject, and in my opinion highly qualified. Incidentally she has game-farm experience, - a rare thing in my crowd.

Anderson is now in charge of census and songbird management work on the Arboretum. He is a very thorough ornithologist. He was intending, after getting his Masters next June, to seek a job. However if a full fellowship were offered he would doubtless stay.

I do not want to commit either of these individuals, but I can say I will have suitable personnel by July 1.

In the meantime, I am in difficulty. Errington and I have been keeping up the census work at Prairie du Sac by paying a local observer (Albert Gastrow), trained by Errington, \$200 per winter. The structure would, of course, more or less collapse if we missed a winter's observation, especially at this time when the cycle seems to be upsetting everything. I paid Gastrow last year and Errington the two preceding years. I am wondering whether, in order to hold this area open for your project and to preserve the continuity of the data, you could help us out to the extent of \$200 this year, the student to be added about July 1.

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This is assuming, of course, that you get the additional funds for the project. Should you not get them, the suggestion would of course be irrelevant.

Gastrow works three days a week all winter, so you can see the \$200 is a reasonable sum.

From your angle, it would take many thousands of dollars and years of time to duplicate the basic data we have at Prairie du Sac. I do not imply, of course, that all or even most of the predator-proofing study would be confined to Prairie du Sac. It should spread over all our areas, and far outside where opportunity offers. A base datum is, however, essential, and the only kind I can think of is an improved area with accumulated population measurements.

All of this is also premised upon Errington's consent, but I imagine he would give it enthusiastically.

With best regards,

AL:MFG

Aldo Leopold
Professor of Game Management

P. S. The MIDDLE WESTERN GAME CONFERENCE will take place at Ann Arbor about the middle of December, and the Wilson Club Meeting is at Chicago, November 27 - 29. If Vogt or Peterson are coming out, it might be well to take in these meetings.

A. L.