

Aldo Leopold
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Soils Bldg
June 26.

Dear Paul -

After the subject matter had been "cooling off" in my mind for a year, it was re-assuring to get a strong favorable impression from your Hawk Food Habit paper in the last Condor. I think you need never apologize for that piece of work.

I was unexpectedly called to Richland Centre the day after I saw you, so you probably went to my office only to find it closed. I'm sorry I forgot to notify you. Drop in next time for your reprints.

Ever since our last two conversations I've had the uncomfortable feeling that my mind was not working well enough to contribute anything really useful to your Sauer job. Since then - like Lewis Carroll - I've thought of "jokes I might

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have cracked while others were around me."

There is possibly substantial enough to warrant the attempt to write about it.

We habitually approach game research in terms of individual species studies. Why use this unit? Like wise we use particular aspects of structure or behavior as units. Why? Are these not possibly merely ornithological tradition? You are trying to reach farmers. Why not, therefore, use land units, and treat of all species thereon. This comes much nearer being applied ecology.

For instance, it is thinkable that you might select certain farms, and on them carry out, as an ecological whole, a study embracing all the species-typcs you now have in hand (except

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laboratory checks, such as your pheasant food experiments) Thus instead of quail census, fox food, dove abundance, pheasant kill-ratio, etc all being scattered in different places, they would all be studied where their total, as well as their separate values, would yield something new.

This might not work for your collaborators - part of them are likely not ecologically minded - but it might be worth considering for yourself and staff. If its any good, then many of the Remuneration Areas would give you a wider range of observable controls.

Politically it would enable you to talk more about average farms, and less about special interests such as sportsmen groups.

One other idea may be worth

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mentioning - its not new. I would not give over to others all of the personal supervision of actual management operations. Until you personally have conducted food, cover, stocking, and other management operations in Dura, your "moral position" is not as strong as it otherwise would be. Gloddard, of course, is always harping on this, and he repeats it again in his new York speech - the personal manipulation of land as well as study of wild life.

This may all be a blind alley but more vital than what I had to offer in our last two talks.

Yours

Aldo Leopold