

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

P. O. Box 1348
Albuquerque, N. M.
December 12, 1951

Mr. Fredric Leopold
Burlington, Iowa

Dear Mr. Leopold:

I appreciate your sending me a reprint of your paper on wood ducks. This paper presents a lot of needed material on a highly interesting species.

In Vermont and New Jersey two years ago, I was surprised to learn of their success with wood duck nesting boxes. The Game Departments of those states used boxes of the same size and type that you used, but instead of putting them on trees, the box was set on a pole or pipe and placed out in the water. Placing them in the water removed the competition of raccoons, owls, etc. also the hazards of the journey from the nest boxes to the water. The boxes I saw were only six or seven feet above the water, and if I remember rightly, they had an average of about 50% occupancy the first year.

Your studies and experiences in some eastern states indicate that a shortage of suitable nesting sites may be a limiting factor in wood duck numbers. It appears to be a reasonable assumption that wood ducks will not move promptly into man-made nest boxes if there are enough natural sites.

Perhaps your studies may show the way to a relatively simple method of producing more wood ducks.

Sincerely yours,



A. E. Borell
Regional Biologist