

M<sup>e</sup>Beath

Mic. Michigan  
April 5, 1963

TO: D. J. Curry, Regional Deputy Director  
FROM: John Byelich, District Game Supervisor  
SUBJECT: Kirtland's Warbler

The Kirtland's or Jack Pine Warbler as it is often called is a rare and perhaps a vanishing species. It nests only in a few counties in Michigan. An area 60 by 100 miles will encompass the entire breeding range. Oscoda and Ogemaw Counties supports over one half of the total known population (500 birds). This shortlived species with its limited numbers, its long annual migration to the Bahama Islands and its very exacting habitat requirements make its survival questionable.

Verne Dockham, retired C.O., Harold Mayfield, Author of book "The Kirtland's Warbler" and the Audubon people have recognized the precarious position of the bird and have urged that a definite program be set up to assure its survival. On a number of occasions Mr. Dockham has discussed with me the possible methods for developing warbler habitat.

Through the instigation and insistence of the above group of men and with the cooperation of the Conservation Department and the approval of the Michigan Conservation Commission, three Kirtland management units were set up and are now in operation. It was decided to have areas in different counties in different habitat and under different foresters which would provide better chances for success and supply more information for future use. In order to maintain these areas from a forest management basis, four square miles were included in each unit. These large areas would assure more than a minimum area of warbler habitat and allow different parts of the unit to be in varying stages ranging from openings to merchantable trees that would least modify forest management practices.

In the spring of 1958 steps were taken to develop this habitat by planting. That spring over 250,000 trees were planted in such a manner to attempt to duplicate a natural habitat.

In 1960 the U. S. Forest Service in cooperation with this office and the Audubon Society also prepared a tentative plan for the preservation of the warbler habitat. In 1962 the plan was adopted and over 4,000 acres was set aside in the Huron National Forest southeast of Mic.

Recently I have met with the U. S. F.S. and members of the Audubon Society to discuss the possibility of a public dedication ceremony to recognize the plight of this bird and the efforts of agencies involved in its management.

This program was approved and moved rapidly. The dedication date is set for June 1, 1963 in Mio. Life and National Geographic Magazine have been notified. Life immediately acknowledged and agreed to cover. National Geographic has not answered as yet. Articles and Editorials have occurred in newspaper. Dr. Gabrielson has accepted to be the main speaker. U. S. F. S. representative from Washington and Milwaukee are scheduled to attend.

Up to this point I had no trouble cooperating with these Agencies. Now the program requires answers to questions that are beyond my authority. From now on it will depend upon our Department as to the extent of our participation in this program. It seems to me that this is a good opportunity to improve our image by active participation. If it is decided to participate then we'll have to get in touch with the U. S. Forest Service I & E to work out publicity and preparation of a brochure. U. S. Forest Service has given every indication to being very cooperative and is urging us to participate more.

A tentative program has been outlined with my cooperation but should have further review by our Department.

A speaker will have to be assigned to tell our part of the story, possibly Dr. Douglass or Dr. Leonard.

Compile a list of individuals and organizations with the U. S. Forest Service and send out notices or invitations. I personally think organizations such as: MUCC; M.S.U. Extension Service; Natural Area Council; U of M Resource School; National Audubon Society; Bureau of Recreation; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; A.F.P.I.; O.R.R.R.C and Tourist Council, should be considered.

Field trips are scheduled to take place after the ceremonies. Department personnel will be required to carry out our part of the field trip.

Excuse the long letter, I didn't have time to make it any shorter.

JB:rw  
cc-McBeath