

## THE KIRTLAND'S WARBLER MANAGEMENT AREA, HURON NATIONAL FOREST

Remarks by Edward P. Cliff, Chief, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, at the Dedication, of the Area, Mio, Michigan, June 1, 1963

Our meeting here today is an historic event. We will visit areas where for the first time intensive forest management is being directed to benefit a single species of songbird--the rare Kirtland's Warbler.

I am very glad the U.S. Forest Service has had a part in this unique effort.

We are here to dedicate an area--a bit of ground. In doing this we are recognizing the importance of that bit of ground to a small and little-known songbird and, in a sense, the importance of that act to all of us.

In a larger sense I believe we are gathered to recognize a much more important thing--a basic concept; the attitude of Americans toward the stewardship of our public lands; the belief that somewhere on the land we own in common can be found the space to care for and protect the interests of even the smallest of our citizen-interest groups.

I also feel that in participating in the dedication of a small part of the Huron National Forest to the future welfare of this strange little bird the majority of Americans will never see, you are recognizing the Department of Agriculture's approach to the administration of the National Forest System to be in keeping with your idea of that concept. In a sense your being here is a vote of confidence on your part that the Forest Service will do the important things necessary in administering your National Forests for all the people.

But importance is a most difficult thing to evaluate. Too often, I'm convinced, it is measured in terms of magnitude or chronology; "the biggest," "the most," "the first," etc. Our presence here today clearly indicates that to us there frequently are other criteria significant in measuring importance.

It's difficult to describe just how the Forest Service arrives at the relative importance of alternative possibilities in its making of multiple use decisions; how it was decided that more than 4,000 acres of the Huron National Forest should be dedicated to the welfare of a tiny songbird. I should like to try, however, to give perspective to our act today by comparing it with a few of the other things that are happening somewhere else in the National Forest System.

If yesterday was a typical workday, the National Forest System was a beehive of activity--being a Friday, the end of the month, and a holiday weekend as well, things were happening even faster than usual from Maine to California and from Puerto Rico to Alaska.

Yesterday the sun rose on more than four million deer, elk, big-horn sheep, bear, and other big-game animals at home in their National Forest habitat. Had yesterday occurred early in the big-game hunting season in all States, more than a hundred thousand hunters would have hung a trophy by their camp before nightfall. That same sun also rose on many millions of small game and other animals in trees, burrows, and caves throughout the National Forest System.

Countless millions of birds stretched their wings and fed their young, and preened in the morning sun. Most of them represented groups much larger than the Kirtland's Warbler, but a few others like the great condors of the Los Padres National Forest in California share the warblers' need for a special home in the National Forests.

If yesterday was an average day in May, 50 or 60 wildfires which had already charred about 700 acres of the National Forests were detected and put out. Yesterday--in fact right now--lookouts are constantly scanning the horizon, patrol planes are in the air, and airtankers, smokejumpers, and suppression crews are standing by wherever the fire danger is high.

By noon yesterday, the sun shone hotly on the backs of about 6 million head of livestock grazing on the rangeland of the National Forests and Grasslands. Rangers were active in many areas inspecting the range, discussing its management with some of the more than 19,000 permittees involved, and generally administering the one-in-every-three acres of the National Forest System that is rangeland.

Yesterday more than 200 square miles of the National Forests were photographed from the air to aid in mapmaking and resource management, and the work of Forest Service crews and contractors included more than 900 miles of road maintenance and the addition of more than 20 miles of new roads. They also rehabilitated more than 1,100 acres of rangeland; improved about 300 acres of fish and game habitat and 2,500 acres of timber stands; added to the still overcrowded supply of recreation facilities by constructing or reconstructing more than 200 family camp and picnic units; and over 400 acres of deteriorated watersheds and several miles of eroding stream channels and old roads were treated for watershed improvement purposes. Although the tree planting season is drawing to a close, crews were finishing up reforestation projects yesterday that saw about 225,000 acres planted or seeded during the past year.

The warming rays of yesterday's sun drove the trout and bass and other fish into the depths and shadows along many of the 81,000 miles of streams and rivers and thousands of Lakes in the National Forests. And yesterday, today, and tomorrow, an army of perhaps 500,000 men,

women, and children--armed with fishing rods and much enthusiasm--is or will be matching wits with inhabitants of National Forest waters.

In fact, forest rangers and their assistants were especially busy yesterday preparing for the flood of visitors that will start this weekend and will not slacken until after Labor Day. We expect about 125 million recreation visits to the National Forests this year and right now, more than two million people are camping, picnicking, hiking, or otherwise enjoying their National Forests in person.

Yesterday, between breakfast and supper time, powersaws and logging trucks harvested about 40 million board feet of National Forest timber. For this timber, some 25,000 operators paid about one-half million dollars into the Federal Treasury. This wood, removed in accordance with sound silvicultural practices and detailed timber management plans, is the equivalent of that used in constructing about 4,000 houses. That harvest generated a day's labor for more than half a million breadwinners throughout the Nation--mostly in areas where a day's labor is getting hard to find.

Yes--yesterday was a busy day on the National Forests--but we all know that the days ahead will be equally full; probably even more so. It is exactly this fast-moving tempo--this unending working with current needs while looking ahead to the many and varied future needs of the people--that highlights the importance of what we are doing here today.

By our actions here today we are permanently securing one more piece into the great mosaic that is our National Forest System. And we are doing it as part of the multiple use philosophy of public forest management; a philosophy that accepts as equally important to the American people a day's work that accommodates a half-million fishermen and simultaneously contributes a half-million dollars in Treasury receipts for timber harvested; a day's work that sees it in the public interest both to harvest enough timber to build houses and homes for more than 4,000 families, and to set aside more than 4,000 acres to provide the same security for 1,000 tiny Kirtland's Warblers.

Lest I be misunderstood, I hasten to make it clear that we in the Forest Service are fully aware that we don't, or couldn't, do these things alone. Forty million board feet of National Forest timber couldn't be harvested every working day without the help of the far-flung lumber industry that is making America a better place in which to live; and we couldn't have set this area aside today, and by so doing also make our country a better place in which to live, without the advice and assistance of our cooperators.

Cooperating agencies, both State and private, working with the Forest Service have made possible the development of the Kirtland's Warbler management area. Your research and long efforts to bring attention to this species provided the necessary information upon which we could base our management plans. Your farsightedness, together

with the enthusiasm of local people who helped keep interest alive during the early studies on this species, is commendable.

The Forest Service has worked closely with the National Audubon Society on a number of projects, including, as I mentioned earlier, the creation of the special refuge on the Los Padres National Forest in California for the protection of another rare species, the California condor.

To me, it is very interesting to note how through the years the program and philosophy of the Audubon Society has broadened in scope to include all phases of resource use and development. Its fine magazine reflects this change. It repeatedly demonstrates a real concern in safeguarding the public interest in all our natural resources. Such sincere interest is essential to a real understanding of the many complex situations encountered in resource management.

I am also pleased to see the Michigan Natural Areas Council as one of the agencies cooperating with the Forest Service in the development of this area.

Of course the cooperation and assistance given by the Michigan Conservation Department, both to the Forest Service in connection with this particular area, and to those groups concerned with doing the best that can be done for the Kirtland's Warbler over all of its range, is well known and is appreciated.

In closing, I hope that events here today are ample proof--to those that might doubt--that the Forest Service is determined that its multiple use management of the National Forests does not become over-oriented in the direction of any of the major and better-known National Forest uses; that its resource management deliberations always shall consider all values, and its decisions always shall be premised on the fundamental principle that the combination of the results of all decisions must best serve the most people in the long run.

It is both a privilege and pleasure to meet with you here today, and to join in the dedication of a portion of one of the Nation's older National Forests to a new and unique purpose; an area to be specially managed for the rare Kirtland's Warbler.