

1945

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
BANDELIER NATIONAL MONUMENT
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

September 30, 1945

Memorandum for the Director.

Reference is made to your memorandum No. F. O. 235 dated September 24th requesting a report of accomplishments in the field of wildlife conservation since August 31, 1944. The following pertains to conditions at Bandelier National Monument.

Mule deer seem to be getting more numerous every year in the vicinity of Frijoles Canyon Headquarters and it may be not many years before we have a "deer problem". Bears showed a slight increase over the area generally. There was a gratifying increase in the number of Merriam turkeys but they can still be said to be scarce. Wood cutters and sheep herders continue to kill off the old and young on their breeding grounds in the high mountains above the monument.

 Grouse showed a slight increase on the area after reaching an all-time low during 1944. It is believed that intensive grazing of the high country during the war years has so depleted the grass and shrubs in the meadows that breeding conditions for the grouse have become unfavorable to such an extent as to almost eliminate them. Overgrazing doubtless has an adverse effect on the Merriam Turkey. Grazing has been eliminated on the monument but neither the grouse of the

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Merriam turkey habitually nests at the low elevation of most of the monument.

The thousands of people stationed at Los Alamos Atomic Bomb Site so close to us has resulted in the very heavy use of the streams in this vicinity for recreational fishing. The streams have been fished out to such an extent that the prospects for fishing after the war are not bright.

It is recommended that as soon as funds can be made available studies be carried on to determine the feasibility of re-stocking a number of species that were native to the country at one time. It seems from studies carried on so far that mountain sheep, elk, otter and other mammals and birds were once native to this section and have now become extinct. As natural conditions are once more being re-established due to elimination of grazing and wood cutting, it would be advisable to explore the possibility of restoring these animals to the community. It would also seem advisable to give the Merriam turkey, grouse and bear protection on their breeding grounds on the high country above the monument. These species range in the monument and are protected part of the year, but suffer from illegal hunting and grazing during their breeding season in the higher elevations.

Chester A. Thomas,
Custodian.

cc; The Regional Director, Three.