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South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

James A. Timmerman, Jr., Ph.D.
Director

W. Brock Conrad, Jr.
Deputy Director for
Wildlife and
Freshwater Fisheries

May 18, 1995

MEMORANDUM TO: Donnie Campbell

FROM: Mike Caudell *Mike*

Please find enclosed the annual progress report for the third year of the grant agreement (DE-FG09-87SR15191) between the USDOE and the S.C. Department of Natural Resources. Drenia Frampton will provide the appropriate financial documentation when finalized.

I hope this meets with your approval. If additional information is required, please contact me (5-3663).

MC/mh

cc: Pat Jackson
John Frampton
Tim Ivey
Robert Gooding

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NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES
AND BIODIVERSITY MAINTENANCE
PROGRESS REPORT

July 1, 1994 -- June 30, 1995

Michael B. Caudell

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
Columbia, S.C. 29202

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May 1995

PREPARED FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
UNDER GRANT NUMBER
DE-FG09-87SR15191

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Thirty-eight days were spent administering hunts on Crackerneck Wildlife Management Area with 1,535 people participating. 1,189 USDOE access permits were issued for the area. Applicants represented 37 of South Carolina's 46 counties, as well as 6 other states. Biological data was collected on 85 deer, 22 turkeys, 45 feral hogs, 86 ducks of two species, 13 bobwhites, 12 gray squirrels, 1 coyote, and 89 fish of 5 species. A news release announcing the hunts was prepared. Preparatory work prior to the hunts included 15 miles of roads brushed and mowed, check station and pond areas manicured, and 25 WMA signs replaced on 11 miles of boundary as needed. Wildlife opening work included: 26 acres of annuals planted, 20 linear quail plots planted with perennials, 10 established bicolor patches mowed and fertilized, 34 established linear quail plots fertilized, 6 miles of roads seeded to clover, and 12 miles of road fertilized. Other work on the area included erecting 4 wood duck nest boxes, bringing the area's total to 23. All boxes were checked for reproduction four times during the nesting season. 9 wood duck hens were banded and 4 previously banded birds were recaptured. Met with SCDNR (Fisheries), USFS, USDOE, SCS, and NUS to electro-shock Skinface Pond to determine species composition and balance and formulate revitalization and management plans for the pond including liming, fertilization, herbicide application, and stocking of sterile grass carp. Tours of the area were provided to Quail Unlimited, USFS, Westinghouse, and SCDNR (Small Game & Region II).

Serving as a Coordinating Land User for the SRS Site Use Committee entailed evaluating 65 land use proposals with regard to effects on wildlife populations and critical habitats. As a member of the USFS-ID Team, attended 5 meetings and two field inspections to review resource management plans on 10 timber compartments. Served on the Natural Resources Coordinating Committee necessitating quarterly meeting attendance, document review for task groups reporting to the NRCC, and issuance of opinion statements on a variety of issues. Served on the Set-Aside Task Group reviewing potential impacts to key habitat areas. Issued 10 depredation permits to the USFS for beaver and raccoon. Other meetings attended were deer and hog control and remote worker communication and safety. RD&D and Crackerneck Harvest and Utilization Reports (spring and fall) were provided to the USDOE. Numerous meetings and correspondence resulted from the SCDNR proposal to add Hunt Unit 19 to Crackerneck, the USFS proposal to eliminate access permits on the area (approved), and the Wackenhutt proposal to eliminate hunter registration on the area and open the gate.

Bait sites for turkey trapping purposes were maintained on the SRS for three months. 31 turkeys (19 gobblers, 12 hens) were captured with 16 being used for in-state restoration and 12 being transported to North Carolina to assist with that state's re-introduction program. Three excess gobblers were banded and released at the capture site for future study. All birds were monitored before leaving the SRS. Reviewed SREL's turkey

research papers on the SRS, prior to publication. Evaluated data on 239 turkeys harvested in Aiken County.

The antlerless deer quota program continued in the district with 136 landowners in Aiken, Barnwell and Orangeburg counties being approved for antlerless harvests. Evaluations included field inspections, acreage verifications at tax offices, and personal correspondence. Biological data on 1,335 deer from 48 Aiken and Orangeburg County clubs was evaluated with a harvest report and future harvest recommendations provided to each club. An additional 1,229 deer jawbones from District V were evaluated for age determination and harvest reports with recommendations were provided to 21 Barnwell County clubs. Assistance was provided with antler scoring for the state records program at sessions in New Ellenton, Barnwell and Columbia. Twelve days were spent in Edgefield County assisting with data collection on Western Piedmont deer hunts. Assisted the Deer Project in Columbia for four days with counting and packaging antlerless deer and Piedmont doe tags.

Wildlife census work was conducted on wild turkeys, bobwhite, mourning doves, bald eagles, fox squirrels, and furbearers on the SRS and in Aiken and Barnwell Counties.

Additional work on WMA lands included reposting 68 miles of boundary in Aiken and Lexington Counties with 590 signs. Signs were removed from 7 tracts withdrawn from the program. 14 safety zone signs were posted to satisfy a landowner's concern with an adjoining WMA land. 16 acres were disced and planted at the Head of the Creek WMA dove field in Lexington County and one hunt was conducted. Maps, brochures, tags, and data gathering equipment were continually supplied to 26 Aiken County check stations. Future recommendations for the Spring Turkey and Regulations Brochures were submitted and WMA maps covering Aiken, Lexington, and Crackerneck were updated. 1994 Project Accomplishments and 1995 Project Goals were submitted to Columbia.

Ten F.A.C.E. (food & cover establishment) plots for 4-H competition were judged in Aiken County with kids winning regional awards in several age categories. Assisted with two SCDNR sponsored kids' fishing rodeos in Graniteville and Barnwell. Technical assistance was provided to 7 landowners in Aiken, Barnwell, Edgefield, and Orangeburg Counties with management for deer, turkey, waterfowl, and quail. 7 depredation permits were issued in Aiken County for beaver and gray squirrel. Forest Stewardship work included: funding meetings (2), site visits (2), work sheet preparation (1), and written correspondence (2). Provided a talk on Quality Deer Management to a Barnwell County club. Represented the SCDNR at an SRS Future Use public hearing in Blackville and advocated additional public recreation on the SRS.

Assisted conservation officers on numerous occasions with game law violations, investigation of strange animal sightings,

transportation of injured wildlife for rehabilitation, and nuisance animal complaints. Underwent pistol requalification at the Criminal Justice Academy. Attended the USFS-SCDNR cooperative meeting at the Webb Center as well as several biologists and regional meetings around the state. Attended a five-day Boone and Crockett certification seminar in Athens, GA., for scoring all North American big game animals. Attended a Wildlife Society meeting in Edgefield. Attended a "4th Generation Management" seminar to improve productivity and fiscal accountability. Met with SCDNR staff from other divisions to plan access improvements to the Savannah River Bluffs Heritage Preserve in North Augusta.