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*Acting**Caswell 07/8*

JUN 27 1985

Memorandum

To: Director, Fish and Wildlife Service

From: Associate Director - Federal Assistance *Roman H. Koening*

Subject: Land Acquisition Approval - Increase in Acquisition of Kirtland's Warbler Habitat

The region is requesting approval to increase the acquisition goal for Kirtland's warbler habitat from 4,500 acres (approved August 26, 1980) to 7,700 acres. Additional habitat protection needs have been identified. Because of this, they are requesting permission to raise the goal by 3,200 acres.

The present population of the Kirtland's warbler is estimated at 214 nesting pairs. The population in 1961 was 1,000 birds. The goal to maintain a self-sustaining population in the recovery plan is 1,000 nesting pairs. To accomplish this, 135,000 acres of land must be managed. Lands in north central Michigan have been identified that are suitable for management. The U.S. Forest Service and the State of Michigan have designated about 126,000 acres for management in that area. Initially, the FWS was to acquire 4,500 acres to be managed by the State. It has now been determined the acreage should be increased; the Service acquiring an additional 3,200 acres and the Forest Service the balance.

The Kirtland's warbler has highly specific nesting requirements. It originally nested in jack pine 5 to 21 feet tall (8-21 years old) that had been burned by wildfires. The management plan on which the earlier acreage requirements were based called for rotational cutting, controlled burning and planting to ensure that 36,000 to 40,000 acres of nesting habitat was available at any one time.

Studies since 1980 have revealed that Kirtland's warbler requires larger territories in plantations than in habitat created by wildfires, thus; the need for the additional acreage. Based on their past experience, the region believes this acreage increase is achievable. Cost to acquire the additional acreage is estimated to be \$1.8 million or \$563 per acre. The Kirtland's warbler LPP will be amended to reflect this change in acreage if this increased acquisition is approved.

Because of the critical level of the population of Kirtland's warblers, I recommend your approval of the acquisition of the additional 3,200 acres at an estimated cost of \$1.8 million to fulfill the habitat needs for the recovery of this warbler.

Concur:

(sgd.) Walter B. McAllister
Acting Associate Director - Wildlife Resources

JUN 28 1985
Date

(sgd.) Suzanne Meyer
Acting Associate Director - Habitat Resources

JUN 28 1985
Date

(sgd.) Kevin A. Volburg
Assistant Director - Planning and Budget

JUL 3 1985
Date

Approve:

/SGD./ROBERT A. JANTZEN
Director, Fish and Wildlife Service

JUL - 6 1985
Date

cc: 2343-RF 2540-PDW 2556-PL
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