

# ROCKEFELLER REFUGE HOSTS MIGRATORY BIRD COMMITTEE

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**T**HE VITAL IMPORTANCE of the Louisiana coastal marshes to waterfowl conservation in North America was a principal item of discussion at a meeting of top conservation officials held at Rockefeller Refuge, January 21-25.

Members of the International Migratory Bird Committee, consisting of representatives of United States and Canadian conservation and agriculture agencies, also considered a variety of other subjects of interest to Pelican State hunters. Formed in 1961, the Committee meets once or more each year to review programs and make plans for future work designed to perpetuate and enlarge the continental supply of ducks and geese. It marked the first time that members of the Committee met in Louisiana.

This year in addition to hearing reports on the status of wetland acquisition in both countries, the Committee heard detailed accounts of marsh management projects from J. B. Earle, and Olan Dillion of the Soil Conservation Service, John Lynch of the Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife, and Robert Chabreck of the Louisiana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit who reported on the history and value of the refuges in Louisiana. He also gave a breakdown on some of the various research projects being conducted on some of the state-owned refuges.

Plans for the Canadian Wildlife Service to assume the responsibility for the breeding ground surveys in Canada, now carried out by the Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife, were approved by the Committee.

The state-managed refuge was ideally situated to host the meeting, particularly because it gave the Canadians and also other members of the International Migratory Bird Committee from the northern states an opportunity to see first hand the coastal marshes of Louisiana when they are being heavily utilized by waterfowl.

Louisiana's position at the southernmost end of the vast Mississippi Flyway causes the state to serve as a wintering home for about 5 million ducks and 400,000 blue and snow geese from northern nesting grounds. The refuge plays host to hundred of thousands of ducks, geese and wading birds each year. It also serves as a resting area for many of the transit birds that winter in Central and South America. The members of the committee made several airplane and helicopter flights over the refuge and adjacent marshes and rice fields of Southwest Louisiana. Also, a complete tour of Rockefeller was made by automobile, marsh buggy and airboat to view the various water control structures, impoundment systems



Pictured above from left to right, Dr. Glasgow, Dr. and Mrs. Ernest Cote', Stanley A. Cain and Dr. John Gottschalk, Director of U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service participants in the International Migratory Bird Meeting held at Rockefeller Refuge. A complete tour of the area was made by airplane, marsh buggy and airboat.

and marsh management practices employed on the area.

The group met with Director Glasgow and members of his staff Tuesday evening. From Canada, representatives were Deputy Minister and Mrs. Ernest Coté, Department of Northern Development and Indian Affairs, Dr. David Munro, Chief, Canadian Wildlife Service, and Nolan Perret, representing the Canadian Agricultural Resources Development Administration. Dr. Stanley A. Cain, Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Interior, Dr. John S. Gottschalk, Director, Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife, Norman A. Berg, Deputy Administrator, Soil Conservation Service and Dr. Lawrence Compton, Chief Biologist, Soil Conservation Service, made up the American delegation.

Such meetings serve as a forward step to a better understanding of the problems of waterfowl management and harvest of this most valuable resource. Also, the coordinating efforts between the Canadian and United States wildlife workers will help shed new light on the many complex problems of managing the continental waterfowl population. \*

