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RE - Michigan
Kirtland's Warbler

NOV 8 1983

Dr. Ronald O. Skoog, Director
Department of Natural Resources
Box 30028
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Dr. Skoog:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of Natural Resources have been working cooperatively to protect and manage certain lands for the benefit of the Kirtland's Warbler under the terms of the cooperative agreement between our agencies dated September 14, 1978. The FWS has been purchasing lands for DNR management since 1980. During Fiscal Year 1983, which ended September 30, 1983, we acquired 1,152.68 acres of habitat at a cost of \$500,000.

We anticipate receiving \$1 million dollars in Fiscal Year 1984 for the Kirtland's Warbler land acquisition program. We plan on recontacting the landowners which did not respond to our earlier letter or indicated they did not want to sell. A few landowners have not been contacted yet because we do not have their names and addresses.

In reviewing the priority list, we note some tracts within a legal subdivision have multiple owners. For instance, within tract priority number 12, there are 26 individual ownerships which comprise the 160 acres. As this project is based on a willing seller concept, we would like your recommendation as to how we should proceed on these multiple owner priority areas. It is quite possible that all landowners within a priority area will not agree to sell. Should we acquire the individual ownerships as they become available for sale with expectations of acquiring the remainder at a later date? Or, is it best to negotiate with all the landowners of a priority area with the understanding that all must agree to sell before we acquire any of the tracts within the priority area? If we adopt the latter alternative, we would expect it may be difficult to get all the parties within a priority area to agree to sell at the same time.

Also, it is conceivable we could work completely through the priority list, contact all the landowners, and, because of people's unwillingness to sell, still have acquisition funds available. Are there additional lands suitable for Kirtland's Warbler Habitat Management which could be added to the priority list? If so, we would appreciate receiving a secondary priority list by December 31, 1983, if at all possible. We need this much time in order to contact the landowners, complete appraisals, obtain options and obligate our Fiscal Year 1984 funds by September 30, 1984.

In working with the priority list, we noted a few incongruities that we would like to have clarified:

- 1. Priority number 29 is listed as being in Crawford County, but the legal description describes land in Roscommon County. Is the legal description correct?
- 2. The legal description of priority number 45b matches priority number 45c. What is the legal description of 45c?
- 3. The legal description of priority number 47 describes State owned land as shown in the Plat Book. Is this description correct?

We look forward to continuing this cooperative venture with you to accomplish our mutual goal of providing additional habitat for this endangered bird. Considering the task ahead of us, your early response will be appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

James C. Gritman
Acting Regional Director

bcc: WA
SE
Refuge Manager, Shiawassee NWR