

MONTHLY REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

Fish Springs Refuge

June 25, 1964

I. INTRODUCTION

June was exceptionally wet and cool. One and seventy-six hundredths inches of precipitation were received since the previous monthly report. This has resulted in extremely high water tables within the marsh.

The waterfowl inventories indicate around 500 birds using the marsh. Nesting dispersal accounts for the low number and we estimate a population of 1,000 birds. Broods hatching is underway with 52 duck broods containing 310 young observed on the brood count made the 24th. Fifty-three broods of coots were also observed containing 188 young.

Eight broods containing 41 goslings were procured in the captive goose pen. The majority of the goslings were lost and only 13 have survived. At this time, we do not have definite knowledge of the cause of the loss, but strongly suspect coccidiosis. Seven broods were procured in the wild resulting in 29 young. This is an increase over the three broods produced last year, our first wild production.

II. ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Marsh Development, Phase III: Work on this contract was finally completed June 10, 1964.

Force Account Construction: In the headquarters area, lawn edging block was installed around quarters 39, 40, and 41 to complete this work. Gravel sidewalks were installed as a temporary measure until time will allow the construction of cement walk ways. The yards were given a final levelling and will be planted next week.

A dragline was rented at the rate of \$15.00/hour from the Ford & Gregory Construction Co. for miscellaneous excavation. A 2,000' drain ditch was constructed in the H pool basin to provide drainage for the south portion of that pool. A 1700' ditch was excavated in F pool basin in order that F pool could be drained clear down. Six thousand feet of irrigation ditch was excavated from Middle Springs to the experimental farming area. In all, an estimated 11,000 cu. yds. were moved at a cost of 0.17/ yd. While constructing the irrigation ditch, one 18" x 29" x 46' aluminum pipe arch with controls was installed in the Middle Springs and one 18" x 29" x 26' aluminum pipe arch was installed for a road crossing at the Thomas House. Construction was completed on the road base connecting I and G pools. An 18" x 29" x 26' corrugated metal pipe arch was installed in the I pool approach road.

Work commenced on the equipment rental contract (#14-16-0002-397). To date (June 25) a total of 8,060 yds. have been moved, at a cost of \$4,326 (equipment rental only).

Operations and Maintenance: Due to the press of construction, maintenance duties were quite nominal. Sixty lbs. of alkali bulrush seed were hand broadcasted along the east shore of H pool. Seed bed preparation was performed on 77 acres of land and the following crops planted. White Proso Millet, 15 acres. Japanese Millet 22 acres. NK 125 grain Sorghum, 35 acres. NK 120 grain Sorghum, 5 acres. A majority of the crops planted have already germinated and emerged.

III. PROBLEMS

Extremely moist ground and a high water table is slowing down progress on the equipment rental contract. To date, we have been switching from one job to another to avoid excessive back patching. Barring the receipt of additional precipitation, conditions should improve steadily.

Smotherweed is increasing greatly. Seedlings are appearing in many locations previously unaffected. The year in purchase of a mud traversing tractor and the aquisition early next fiscal year of a rotary mower, will do much to control this species. Mowing will at least relieve the immediate problem of the windblown weeds plugging our distribution ditches.