



MONTANA



Personnel

1. Robert L. Pearson, Refuge Manager, GS-11 - PFT
2. Laurence R. Veikley, Assistant Refuge Manager, GS-9 - PFT
3. Elizabeth A. Benway, Refuge Assistant, GS-5 - PFT
4. Vincent J. Marko, Maintencenceman, WG-8 - PFT
5. Benjamin M. Lukes, Realty Specialist, Billings AO stationed at
Benton Lake - Transferred to Alaska RO 11/01/81
6. Stephan F. Jun, Bio Aid, GS-3, Temporary - 05/31/81 - 08/28/81
7. Thomas Guza, Bio Aid, GS-2, Temporary - 07/26/81 - 08/25/81
8. William C. Boydstun, Laborer, WG-2, Temporary 05/26/81 - 06/25/81
Volunteer 06/26/81 - 08/07/81
9. Diane L. Alexander, Student Volunteer - 09/23/81 - 10/22/81
10. Wallace G. Ray, Laborer, WG-3, CS - 01/25/81 - 02/06/81

Review and Approvals

Submitted By	Date	Regional Office Review	Date
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Area Office Review	Date
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
A. <u>HIGHLIGHTS</u>	1
B. <u>CLIMATIC CONDITIONS</u>	1
C. <u>LAND ACQUISITION</u>	
1. Fee Title	1
2. Easements	1
3. Other	Nothing to Report
D. <u>PLANNING</u>	
1. Master Plan	Nothing to Report
2. Management Plan	Nothing to Report
3. Public Participation	Nothing to Report
4. Compliance with Environmental Mandates	4
5. Research and Investigations	4
E. <u>ADMINISTRATION</u>	
1. Personnel	4
2. Funding	5
3. Safety	6
4. Technical Assistance	Nothing to Report
5. Other Items	6
F. <u>HABITAT MANAGEMENT</u>	
1. General	Nothing to Report
2. Wetlands	6
3. Forests	Nothing to Report
4. Croplands	9
5. Grasslands	12
6. Other Habitats	Nothing to Report
7. Grazing	12
8. Haying	Nothing to Report
9. Fire Management	Nothing to Report
10. Pest Control	Nothing to Report
11. Water Rights	12
12. Wilderness and Special Areas	Nothing to Report
13. WPA Easement Monitoring	12

G. WILDLIFE

1. Wildlife Diversity	12
2. Endangered and/or Threatened Species	13
3. Waterfowl	13
4. Marsh and Water Birds	14
5. Shorebirds, Gulls, Terns and Allied Species	14
6. Raptors	14
7. Other Migratory Birds	Nothing to Report
8. Game Mammals	14
9. Marine Mammals	Nothing to Report
10. Other Resident Wildlife	15
11. Fisheries Resources	15
12. Wildlife Propagation and Stocking	Nothing to Report
13. Surplus Animal Disposal	Nothing to Report
14. Scientific Collections	Nothing to Report
15. Animal Control	Nothing to Report
16. Marking and Banding	Nothing to Report
17. Disease Prevention and Control	Nothing to Report

H. PUBLIC USE

1. General	Nothing to Report
2. Outdoor Classrooms - Students	Nothing to Report
3. Outdoor Classrooms - Teachers	Nothing to Report
4. Interpretive Foot Trails	Nothing to Report
5. Interpretive Tour Routes	Nothing to Report
6. Interpretive Exhibits/Demonstrations	Nothing to Report
7. Other Interpretive Programs	Nothing to Report
8. Hunting	15
9. Fishing	15
10. Trapping	15
11. Wildlife Observation	Nothing to Report
12. Other Wildlife Oriented Recreation	Nothing to Report
13. Camping	Nothing to Report
14. Picnicking	Nothing to Report
15. Off-Road Vehicling	15
16. Other Non-Wildlife Oriented Recreation	Nothing to Report
17. Law Enforcement	15
18. Youth Program	Nothing to Report
19. Cooperating Associations	Nothing to Report
20. Concessions	Nothing to Report
21. Volunteers Program	Nothing to Report

I. EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

1. New Construction	16
2. Rehabilitation	Nothing to Report
3. Major Maintenance	Nothing to Report
4. Equipment Utilization and Replacement . . .	Nothing to Report
5. Communications Systems	Nothing to Report
6. Energy Conservation	Nothing to Report
7. Other	Nothing to Report

J. OTHER ITEMS

1. Cooperative Programs	20
2. Items of Interest	21
3. Credit	21

K. FEEDBACK 22

A. HIGHLIGHTS

1. Nearly 720 acres of recently acquired cropland were planted to dense nesting cover this year on five waterfowl production areas.
2. Major development plans were accomplished on Schrammeck Lake WPA.
3. Five new fee tracts were acquired during the year.
4. Seven hundred twenty-four additional wetland acres were protected by easement in the district.

B. CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

Climate is discussed in detail in the refuge narrative report. Little additional information is available for the other nine counties, but there were some severe hail storms prior to harvest in northern Toole County.

C. LAND ACQUISITION

1. Fee Title

Five tracts were purchased this year, one in Cascade County and four in Toole County (see Table I). Four of these tracts are important roundouts and one is a separate tract which effectively ties up an old drainage ditch on Long Lake WPA.

Most of the WPA's are complete - if not rounded out completely by fee, they are protected by surrounding easements. The Ehli WPA needs a 120 acre roundout badly to facilitate enhanced water control and management. Unfortunately, the current owner is adamantly against selling even the marsh portion for wildlife purposes. If no agreement can be reached, a dike may be the only remaining solution. This marsh is an extremely productive one when wet, but has for the past two years been dry.

Assistance was given to Realty Specialist Lukes in staking out a new tract for acquisition in 1982.

2. Easements

⁹ ~~Twenty~~ ^{Mistake} tracts containing ⁴⁴⁴ ~~724~~ wetland acres were acquired this year (Table II). Some of these easements will protect wetlands adjoining WPA's. A total of 6553 wetland acres is currently under easement protection here.

TABLE I

FEE TITLE TRACT ACQUISITION BY COUNTY

County	1976		1977		1978		1979		1980		1981		TOTAL	
	No.	Acres	No.	Acres	No.	Acres	No.	Acres	No.	Acres	No.	Acres	No.	Acres
Cascade							1	307.22	1	375.40	1	44.84	3	727.46
Chouteau									7	2093.34			7	2093.34
Glacier			1	96.00 94.12									1	96.00 94.2
Powell	1	300.00 279.6											1	300.00 279.6
Teton	2	251.50											2	251.50
Toole	1	1675.00			6	1408.00			4	685.66	4	300.00	15	4068.66
Totals	4	2226.50	1	96.00	6	1408.00	1	307.22	12	3154.40	5	344.84	29	7536.96

Total Wet- land Acres		339.00		27.00		283.00		93.00		480.00		195.00		1417.00

TABLE II

EASEMENT ACQUISITION BY COUNTY

County	<u>1975</u>		<u>1976</u>		<u>1977</u>		<u>1978</u>		<u>1979</u>		<u>1980</u>		<u>1981</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
	No.	Wet Acres	No.	Wet Acres	No.	Wet Acres	No.	Wet Acres	No.	Wet Acres	No.	Wet Acres	No.	Wet Acres	No.	Wet Acres
Glacier			21	881	13	435	4	252	5	248					43	1816
Liberty	7	393	2	35											9	428
Pondera	3	291	4	310											7	601
Teton			1	50											1	50
Toole	18	1405	8	372	3	159			10	311	17	687	20 3	724 37	57 59	2658 2704
													2 went to He feet		51	
TOTALS	28	2089	36	1648	16	594	4	252	15	559	17	687	20	724	136	6553

5777

Total Acres Under Easement

Glacier	20,982.22
Liberty	6,200.00
Pondera	8,335.00
Teton	800.00
Toole	<u>50,992.41</u> 40,621.04
TOTAL	87,309.63 76,938.26

Hill County	3293.86
Cascade	880.00
Chouteau	200.00
Powell	<u>4650.00</u>
FY 82	85,962.12

D. PLANNING

4. Compliance with Environmental Mandates

Mineral Research of Butte, Montana, was contracted to perform an archeological survey on six miles of trails and six parking lot sites at Schrammeck Lake and Kingsbury Lake WPA's. No significant cultural resources were found on either of these sites. The cost of this survey was \$600.00. Additionally, an environmental assessment and Section 7 consultation were prepared for the construction project at Schrammeck Lake WPA. This construction project included the placement of two 48 inch culverts, building one-half mile of access road, a parking lot and boundary fence.

5. Research and Investigations

In cooperation with the Montana Water Quality Bureau, an algae sample was collected at Kingsbury Lake WPA and sent in for analysis. This cooperative monitoring was done in various parts of the state to identify locations which harbor populations of toxic bluegreen algae. These algae can produce toxins under certain conditions that could endanger vertebrate life forms. No such algae were identified in the Kingsbury Lake sample.

This wetland management district has identified its primary problem as water quality degradation. This contamination is caused and enhanced by a progressive outbreak of saline seep. These seeps are becoming more and more prevalent due to past and current farming practices. The Triangle Conservation District has in cooperation with Benton Lake WMD initiated a series of shallow cased wells on two WPA's for the purpose of monitoring sub-surface water tables. These data should provide information on how the seeps respond to a grass-legume planting on a large portion of recharge areas.

Sediment samples were taken at Kingsbury Lake this year. These samples were collected by FWS personnel conducting the Environmental Contamination Survey on FWS lands. Analysis was supposed to be conducted for pesticide and heavy metals contaminants. No results have been received as yet by this station. This was unfortunate since the collection came at a time when widespread contamination of marshland by the pesticide Endrin was suspected in this area. It was hoped that this public crisis would pressure the Service to make quick evaluations of all samples taken in this area. There will be a station attempt to establish some better individual monitoring next year.

E. ADMINISTRATION

1. Personnel

The wetland management district staff is the same as the refuge staff.

2. Funding

The wetland management district is funded in congruence with the refuge budget. This year the only money particularized for the WMD was \$40,000 of BLHP funding. Moreover, the following funds were cost coded to the WMD for 1981.

TABLE III

WETLAND MANAGEMENT DISTRICT EXPENDITURES

<u>Items or Services</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Salaries	\$13,700
Per Diem	1,000
Supplies	1,100
Contract Services	1,600
Other Support Items	<u>3,000</u>
Total	\$20,400

Such things as utilities, general supplies, vehicle and equipment costs are difficult to distribute. An estimation is made to cover these impalpable items and is listed under the "other support items" category.

TABLE IV

BLHP EXPENDITURES

<u>Items or Services.</u>	<u>Amount</u>
DNC Seed	\$10,012.50
Fence Supplies	12,914.75
Road Surface Gravel	4,400.00
Culverts	3,519.70
Cultivation of 340 Acre Field - Iverson	1,487.50
Metal Sign Posts	1,470.00
Grain Drill Rental & Tool Purchase	126.88
GSA Supplies	331.00
Archaeological Survey - Kingsbury & Schrammeck	
Lake WPA's	600.00
Land Measuring Wheel	<u>127.50</u>
Total*	\$34,989.83

*The remainder of the \$40,000 was used for various refuge purchases.

An analysis of man hours for the district was conducted to determine the percentage of time each employee worked for the WMD. There was a slight problem in that there was no cost code information for the voluntary labor received this summer. Estimates were made for these staff hours. The results are as follows:

TABLE V
STAFF HOURS - WETLAND MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>% of Total Time</u>
Pearson - PFT	106	5.1
Veikley - PFT	732	35.2
Marko - PFT	245	11.8
Benway - PFT	8	.4
Jun - T	167	30.1
Guza - T	21	10.3
Boydston - T (volunteer)	102	30.0
Alexander - T (volunteer)	55	30.0
Total	1436	

It is felt that this information is within 80 to 90% accuracy. Without the "code as you do" policy these figures would be uninterpretable.

3. Safety

Although few formal safety meetings were recorded this year, there were many "tailgate" sessions while working on the construction projects at Schramneck Lake and the various other projects involving farming equipment and the temporary staff. The additional effort to remain safety conscious paid off, and the jobs were not hampered by accidents.

5. Other Items

Revenue Sharing - Revenue sharing checks were delivered to the counties by Manager Pearson. A summary of revenue sharing for the WMD is illustrated in Table VI.

F. HABITAT MANAGEMENT

2. Wetlands

After a relatively dry mild winter the wetlands throughout the district were at low levels at best. Early May rains helped some but the ground was so dry little runoff was realized. Wetland conditions were much the same overall as last year with several of the WPA's going completely dry by mid-summer. There are no units in the district with any type of water control.

TABLE VI

REVENUE SHARING RECORD

BENTON LAKE WETLAND MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

County	FY 77	FY 78	FY 79	FY 80	FY 81	Acreage FY 81
<u>Cascade*</u>				1139	2309	44
WPA**				1139	1914	727
<u>Chouteau*</u>					3985	
WPA**					3493	2093
<u>Teton*</u>		416	525	525	525	
WPA **	188	134	194	255	223	252
<u>Powell*</u>		916	916	916	916	
WPA	676	480	696	916	803	300
<u>Toole*</u>		3092	4586	6278	6728	
WPA**	1554	1633	3480	6278	5897	4069
<u>Glacier*</u>		134	134	134	134	
WPA**		72	102	134	117	94
<hr/>						
Totals	2418	2319	4472	8722	12447	7535
<hr/>						
% of Entitlement		52.3	76	100	88	

*Computed Entitlement

**Actual Payment



Alkali marshes in Toole County were dry at seeding time. High winds distribute the salts among the neighbors.
81-5-18 LV

Salinity readings were taken on 5 WPA main marsh units this year. The water levels were probably two-thirds or less of normal capacity. Results are as follows:

<u>WPA</u>	<u>Micromhos/CM</u>	<u>Collection Date</u>
Long Lake	8,400	05/01/81
Danbrook	14,000	07/16/81
Big Sag	6,500	04/06/81
Kingsbury Lake	39,000	02/28/81
Schrammeck Lake	6,500	02/27/81

Those WPA's not monitored were either totally dry or too low to give representative readings. Evidence of duck mortality was recorded at Kingsbury Lake. No specimens were collected, but past mortality has been linked to "salt poisoning" by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Investigation is needed in this area.

Only four round bales were placed in the wetland management district this year. The staff was unable to take advantage of the short winter cold snap that produced enough ice to transport the bales over. The four bales were placed in relatively dry marshes and received no use this year. Five nest cones were constructed and placed on two WPA's. They also received no use. Fifteen bales that were ordered for Toole County had to be turned back to the supplier.



Canada geese in the District had to make do with natural nest sites this year. Schrammeck Lake.
81-4-15 LV

4. Croplands

The district currently administers four cooperative farming permits. One of these (Kingsbury Lake) is a reserved use on 275 acres. The object of the other three is to combat crop depredations. The cooperators leave every third swath of wheat in the field until ten days prior to opening day of waterfowl season. These agreements cover 163 cropland acres. One hundred eighty bushels of wheat were collected this year and stored at refuge headquarters for emergency feeding. One agreement on the Danbrook WPA will be terminated after the 1982 season due to the steep terrain currently farmed. All other croplands in the district are either in tame grasses, dense nesting cover or are programmed for DNC next year.

One cooperator seeded 99 acres of DNC on the Blackhurst Trust WPA. Assistant Manager Veikley and Maintenance man Marko using refuge equipment and one rented grain drill seeded 465 acres of DNC in Toole County in late April and early May. Marko also seeded approximately 56



Equipment used by Veikley and Marko during this year's force account grass seeding project.

81-5-12

LV

acres at Schrammeck Lake WPA. A combined staff effort was made to summer fallow 100 acres at Big Sag WPA this summer. A fall seeding was made, but the little fall precipitation we received did not germinate the seed. It should have over-wintered though, and will be monitored next spring.



Management began on the Big Sag WPA with a 100 acre DNC planting and partial boundary posting.

81-13-6

WB

These combined efforts resulted in some 720 acres of DNC planted this year. By late summer most plantings looked encouraging except for last year's planting on Brumwell WPA. This site will be given one more year to prove out or be redone.



Cover crop of oats
used on a sandy field
had to be mowed in July.
81-15-16 WB

On April 6th Managers Pearson and Veikley met with the field representative for the Department of State Lands to discuss the management options on a 50 to 60 acre crested wheatgrass field located on state land leased by the FWS at Kingsbury Lake. Formal approval was later given to the WMD to convert this planting to DNC at some future date.

By mid-summer the 1980 grass plantings were showing good promise. A summary of cropland management is shown on Table VII.



Danbrook WPA - 2nd
year growth on DNC
planting. Planted
05/10/80.
81-17-7 WB

Ehli WPA - 2nd
year growth on DNC.
Native grasses foreground.
Planted 05/21/80.
81-15-18 WB



TABLE VII

1981 CROPLAND MANAGEMENT

WPA	Total Acres	Total Cropland Acres	Coop Farmed Acres	Restored Native Grasses	DNC	Other Tame Grasses	Future DNC
<u>(Toole County)</u>							
Furnell	1995.00	134.50		134.50			
Ehli	441.15	124.00			124.00		
Danbrook	327.00	217.20	73.00		75.00	69.2	122.2
Blackhurst	320.12	274.00	83.40		190.60		83.4
Brown	260.00	202.00	66.00		120.00		80.0
Long Lake	645.66	384.66			339.66	35.0	10.0
Barrows	80.00	40.00					40.0
<u>(Cascade County)</u>							
Schrammeck Lake	420.24	214.22			121.00	18.0	18.0
Hartelius	307.22	139.00		34.22	180.00		
<u>(Chouteau County)</u>							
Kingsbury Lake	3733.69	375.00 261.30	275.00 261.3			100.0	375.0
Big Sag	349.58	100.00			100.00		
<u>(Teton County)</u>							
Brumwell	251.50	55.00			55.00		
<u>(Glacier County)</u>							
Peterson	96.00	49.00			49.00		
<u>(Powell County)</u>							
McCormick	300.00						
TOTALS	9527.16	2308.58 [?]	497.40	168.72	1354.26	222.2	728.6

5. Grasslands

The district currently manages 3,783 acres of grassland. This is a revision of past acreages due to some old fields of introduced grasses originally counted as natives. These fields have been recategorized to croplands for management purposes. There has been no active management of native grassland. McCormick WPA probably offers the best opportunity for an improved native grass cover over the sagebrush cover now present.

7. Grazing

Mr. Aiken grazed 480 AUM's on the Furnell WPA again this year as per his reserved use. Additionally, Mr. Buchanan was issued a permit to graze 165 AUM's at Kingsbury Lake.

In early July the state warden at Lincoln reported cattle trespass on the McCormick WPA. A check was made and revealed that person(s) unknown has taken down the wires next to the Blackfoot River. This portion is unfenced on one side. Cattle were run out and the fence put back. There needs to be some brushing and additional fencing to protect this portion of habitat and give legal leverage against encroachment.

Minor cattle trespass also occurred at Kingsbury Lake due to poor fence conditions.

11. Water Rights

A two person crew was sent out from the Regional Office in August to consolidate a water rights filing for the refuge and WMD. As a result, filings were made for three stock ponds at Kingsbury Lake and an old diversion ditch on Furnell WPA.

13. WPA Easement Monitoring

Easements were not flown this year. New easements were logged and filed and requests for new aerial photos submitted. We have not received any new aerial photos for new easements taken after 1978.

G. WILDLIFE

Due to the usual heavy work load and limited staff, wildlife census were not conducted. No aerial surveys were taken and minimal information was recorded incidental to other work projects.

1. Wildlife Diversity

Cropland monoculture on several WPA's was converted to dense nesting cover as previously discussed. Once established, this cover should attract some other species of wildlife to these areas. Elimination of grazing on Kingsbury Lake and Schrammeck Lake should also have this effect.

2. Endangered and/or Threatened Species

Bald eagles are present within the district and were observed on McCormick and Big Sag WPA's this year. American Peregrine falcons are also present but were not sighted this year. Nesting of either has not been recorded on service lands.

3. Waterfowl

Although periodic census were not taken, spring waterfowl use appeared to be good on the WPA's. Heavy May rains helped prolong the marginal wetlands through early summer and facilitated some aquatic vegetation and seed production. Over 50 broods were recorded for Big Sag and Danbrook WPA's in July. Due to poorer water conditions this year, production was estimated slightly less than last year at 3600 ducks and 20 Canada geese. Mallards, pintails and gadwalls were believed to be the high producers.

No round bales were placed for geese this winter. Five nest cones were constructed and placed on Schrammeck Lake and Kingsbury Lake in February. The ice was already out and geese were picking sites. The cones were not used.

A dry fall left few attractive spots for migrating birds. The depredation farming crops were not utilized and no depredation complaints were received.



Low water level at Kingsbury Lake this spring made unloading the airboat an interesting experience.
81-2-18 LV

Reflections on Kingsbury Lake . . . an unusually calm day.
81-3-3 LV



4. Marsh and Water Birds

The usual number of these species was present, but it was noted that eared grebe did not return to nest near last year's colonies on Long Lake and Kingsbury Lake. Lower water levels apparently left the sites undesirable and the birds nested elsewhere. One pair of sandhill cranes again used Schrammeck Lake intermittently. No evidence of nesting could be determined.

Probably the most unusual bird in this category for this area is the red-necked grebe which nests on Brown's Lake adjacent to McCormick WPA. Since the WPA includes a small portion of this nesting habitat, it is assumed that it is used.

5. Shorebirds, Gulls, Terns and Allied Species

Low water levels and plentiful mud flats provided much shorebird habitat this year. Franklin's gulls were plentiful at Schrammeck Lake, and California gulls were scattered throughout the district. One young California gull was recorded at Big Sag WPA, but nesting on the unit was unconfirmed.

6. Raptors

Golden eagles were seen regularly on Schrammeck Lake, Kingsbury Lake and Big Sag WPA's. Other raptor observations include marsh hawks, short-eared owls, Cooper's hawk, American kestrels, red-tailed hawks, Swainson's hawks and ferruginous hawks. Last year's ferruginous hawk nest site was apparently unused this year. They may have renested elsewhere on the Kingsbury Tract but no nest observations were made.



Many interesting and varied habitats are available on the Kingsbury Lake WPA.
81-3-8 LV

8. Game Mammals

Mule deer or white-tail deer are present on most of the WPA's. Numbers are not high and hunting harvest is unknown. There seems to be an increase

in white-tail deer use associated with DNC plantings. Use was noted on the Ehli WPA this winter in the tall sweet clover cover. Pronghorns are present on several WPA's also.

10. Other Resident Wildlife

Upland game birds such as Hungarian partridge, sharptail grouse and ring-necked pheasant are present on most WPA's. Ruffed grouse have been recorded at McCormick WPA along the Blackfoot River bottom. Prairie dogs are plentiful on the Big Sag WPA, and a least weasel was also recorded at Big Sag.

11. Fishery Resources

The WMD has one pond on Furnell WPA which has been stocked with rainbow trout by the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks personnel. This pond has inherent water supply problems and has also been used by Canada geese, probably as a nesting area. Last year a night hawk nest was found while walking into the pond. A close evaluation will be made to determine if it is desirable to maintain this marginal fishery at the possible expense of other wildlife. Some ditching and water diversion will be necessary to maintain sufficient water for a fish pond.

H. PUBLIC USE

8. Hunting

Waterfowl, upland game and big game hunting occurs on WPA's. The extent of each is unknown but probably will be increasing as cover develops.

9. Fishing

Little, if any, fishing occurred on Furnell pond due to last year's low water level. Some additional fishing use by floaters on the Blackfoot River is possible on McCormick WPA.

10. Trapping

This use was primarily concentrated on Schrammeck Lake for muskrat this fall. Indications are that a large number of rats was probably taken from this marsh. A raccoon carcass was also found on the unit.

15. Off-road Vehicling

Some indications of driving in DNC were seen on several unfenced WPA's. Additional barricades and no vehicle warnings are needed. Snowmobile trails were observed on Kingsbury Lake and Danbrook WPA, but use appeared minimal.

17. Law Enforcement

An effort was made on opening weekend of waterfowl season to evaluate potential hunting pressure on Schrammeck Lake WPA. Only one hunter was encountered. No other law enforcement work was undertaken.

I. EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

1. New Construction

a. Schrammeck Lake

The staff engaged in complete development on Schrammeck Lake WPA this summer. This unit had no functional access, but did have a 30 foot right-of-way to an old county road about one-half mile away. A small creek obstructed travel across the right-of-way and the only way to get to the WPA was by getting permission from an adjacent landowner to cross his fields.

Two creek crossings were constructed using 48 inch culvert. C. M. Russell Refuge loaned a scraper and operator and a road bed was built down the right-of-way lane. This road and a 150 foot square parking lot were later graveled and compacted using a local gravel pit and contractor for \$6000.00.

About 2 3/4 miles of boundary fence were constructed to tie into existing fences. One old dump was buried and a loading dock was constructed.

An old fence which crossed the marsh was removed except for the stretch points. This should decrease bird mortality and provide heron perches.

The parking area was surrounded by barricades and a metal gate was installed for official access. A cattleguard was installed in the right-of-way road to prevent livestock from entering that way. The area was posted and a directional sign was erected at an old hunter access point down the road.

This project began in late July and all equipment was not back at headquarters until mid October.



Before
Undeveloped access
right-of-way into
Schrammeck Lake WPA.
80-2-7 LV



During
Road construction began with installation
of a 48 inch culvert.
81-19-14 WB



With the road bed completed, CMR heads
down the road with a hearty Hi Ho Yeller!
81-20-13 LV

After
Completed access road is a much needed facility.
82-2-2 LV



Parking lot barrier
completed the Schrammeck
Lake project.
81-22-1 LV

Hot weather prevailed
as 2 3/4 miles of boundary
fence was constructed at
Schrammeck Lake.
81-20-8 LV



A loading dock was
constructed at Schrammeck
Lake. Several more of
these are programmed for
other areas in the future.
81-20-6 SJ



Fence removal in the lake was facilitated by the airboat. Posts and wire were burned and buried.

81-20-15

LV



Before

Old boundary fence prior to roundout acquisition.

80-9-14

LV

After

A 45 acre roundout enabled the removal of this fence.

82-2-5

LV

b. Kingsbury Lake

Mr. Buchanan constructed one mile of boundary fence at Kingsbury Lake WPA. The maintenance and construction responsibility was shared equally by FWS and Mr. Buchanan. The WMD assisted by allowing a six month grazing permit to Mr. Buchanan. The boundary on this unit is entirely fenced now, but there is a need to schedule replacement for some sections of fence.

J. OTHER ITEMS

1. Cooperative Programs

The Triangle Conservation District drilled eight test wells at Brumwell WPA for the purpose of water table monitoring in saline seep areas. Six of the wells were cased and will be monitored to see the effect of DNC on a portion of the recharge area. Saline Seep Abatement Plans were received from the Triangle Conservation District on Long Lake and Brumwell WPA's. Water analysis was done on a Long Lake test well by Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology of Butte. Salinity of the sample was 43,830 micromhos/cm and was very high in sodium, magnesium and sulfates and had .543 mg/L of selenium. Needless to say, we are hoping that the 240 acres of recharge area planted to DNC will help keep this garbage from seeping into the marsh as much as it has in the past.

a. Uncooperative Programs

Prior to the Schrammeck Lake development, we were contacted several times by one of the state game wardens who supposedly spoke in behalf of our surrounding neighbors. He voiced concern over the use of the mile of old county road south from our right-of-way, the location of the parking lot under a "major flyway" from the marsh, boating disturbance and other minor items. The strongest objection his "clientel" had was over the use of the old county road mentioned above. According to him, use of the road by hunters would result in trespass, livestock slaughter, and just all kinds of problems. Managers Pearson and Veikley held a final meeting with this warden and ironed out these problems. We agreed that we would primarily use the north mile of old county road after a creek crossing was repaired but that as far as we knew, the whole route was a public road never officially closed by the county.

Construction proceeded with all equipment having to be moved in through the south route to facilitate the construction of the creek crossing. The crew was immediately thereafter confronted by the same warden and received a "scolding" for going back on our word. An explanation was attempted, but to no avail. A check of the neighbors revealed that none of them had objections to the use of

this road except for a neighbor who coincidentally happened to be the warden's landlord.

Soon after, this neighbor attempted to run CMR's truck transport out of the area by claiming that the road was abandoned and now private property. He closed a gate on the south end and put up a "No Trespassing" sign. He also claimed he was paying taxes on the roadway property. This proved to be false, but with the north end of the road repaired, we proceeded with the project using that route as per instructions from Manager Pearson.

Several meetings, an investigation and numerous phone calls occurred, but the situation is little changed. The county wants no part of the problem and would gladly turn over all the right-of-way documents to us so we would be responsible for maintaining two more miles of road. Legal opinions are as easy to get as pulling teeth. The Solicitor says one thing and the County Attorney hedges. So far the bluff has not been called.



A visitor's eye view of the disputed access route to Schrammeck Lake WPA. Sign says "No Trespassing".
81-20-21

LV

2. Items of Interest

A FWS and State Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks combined tour in May included a brief stop at Hartelius WPA and a planning review of Schrammeck Lake WPA on site. Manager Pearson assisted Jay Hamernick, Assistant Refuge Supervisor of the Area Office on a tour of Hartelius, Brumwell and Schrammeck Lake WPA's.

3. Credits

This report was written by Veikley and typed and assembled by Benway.

K. FEEDBACK

With the risk of beating a dead horse, it must be said that now is the time to be going full steam on wetland acquisition. The economic climate is more and more conducive to willing sellers each day even as drainage techniques proliferate. It appears, however, that the Fish and Wildlife Service will miss this boat and the country will be much the worse for it.