NARRATIVE REPORT FLOATING SLIP

LOCATION: ARDOCH LAKE & KELLYS SLUGH

PERIOD: May-August 1963

CHIEF'S OFFICE: Mr. Gillett
Mr. Ferencek
Mr. Ackermann
Mr. Goldman

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT: Mr. Stiles

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: Mr. Stollberg

OPERATIONS: Mr. Hauser

PUBLIC USE: Mr. Bland
Mr. Luske

PLANNING: Mr. Hinkley

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES: Mike Boll
ARDOCH LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
Walsh County, North Dakota

I. GENERAL

A. Weather Conditions. The period was characterized by near normal weather conditions. There was ample rainfall for good crop production in the vicinity of the refuge. No torrential rains occurred as in 1962 to cause flooding or excess surface water. On May 28, there was practically no water in wetlands on farmland adjacent to the lake.

B. Habitat Conditions.

1. Water. Flow in the Forest River was ample to maintain levels in accordance with the current water management plan. Gauge readings in the 6.20 - 6.40 range were maintained through May, June and July. During August, lack of inflow created lowered water levels. On August 31, the gauge reading was 6.10. The gates were opened briefly during the last week of August to supply cattle water to downstream farmers. There was little flow through the lake during the period, and the water was mostly stationary.

2. Food and Cover. Seed production of alkali bulrush (Scirpus paludosus) and sago pondweed (Potamogeton pectinatus) was good this year. Horned pondweed (Zannichellia palustris) and small pondweed (Potamogeton pusillus) were locally abundant. A pondweed tentatively identified as (Potamogeton vaginatus) was observed. Small amounts of wigeon grass (Ruppia maritima) were observed. Traces of Chara spp. were noted in the northeast portion of the lake. Emergent vegetation is comprised of alkali bulrush as dominant species, with fairly good local distribution of narrow-leaved cattail (Typha angustifolia) and hardstem bulrush (Scirpus acutus). The best appearing marsh is near the north end of the lake.

Fall tillage on fields adjacent to the lake had neared completion by August 31. Waste grain will be very scarce during the fall migration period.

II. WILDLIFE

A. Migratory Birds. A duck breeding pair count was made on May 28. The gauge reading on this date was 6.30. Weather conditions were as follows: 40° F., clear and calm. The count was made by walking the shoreline and counting all pairs and lone males. Count began at 5:15 a.m. and ended at 10:00 a.m. A check of the interior lake was made later with a 20 X spotting scope.
A duck brood count was made on July 17. The gauge reading on this date was 6.75. At this level, all emergent vegetation is flooded. Weather conditions were as follows: 70° F., wind westerly 5 - 10 mph, scattered clouds. The count was made by canoe and paddle around the lake perimeter.

Results of these duck production surveys are indicated below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Breeding Pairs*</th>
<th>5/28/63</th>
<th>Broods</th>
<th>7/17/63</th>
<th>No. of Young and Age Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mallard</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12 IIa, 7 III, 10 Ic, 10 IIc, 4 IIc, 6 IIa, 4 Ic, 8 Iib, 5 Iib, 7 IIa, 10 III, 8 III, 3 &quot;broody&quot; females.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gadwall</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8 Ia, 12 Ib, 10 Ia, 8 Ic, 8 Ia, 1 &quot;broody&quot; female.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baldpate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pintail</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3+ Ia, 8 III, 1 &quot;broody&quot; female.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.w. Teal</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 IIc, 7 IIc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoveler</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2+ IIa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.w. Teal</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>9 Ia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redhead</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 Ib</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canvasback</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 IIc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruddy duck</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>128</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coot: 42 (total birds)

* Includes pairs plus lone males.

Other waterfowl present on May 28 included 5 black ducks, 11 swans, and 1 bufflehead. A pair of wood ducks was observed at the Minto bridge over the Forest River. Other water birds observed on the lake included 10 Franklin's gulls, 4 bitterns, 2 great blue herons and uncounted numbers of black terns, scoters, marbled godwits, killdeer, Wilson's phalaropes, northern phalaropes, Baird's sandpiper and lesser and greater yellowlegs.

On July 17, the following water birds were observed in addition to those reported in the production table above: 75 pelicans, 50 great blue herons, 3 black ducks and 3 wood ducks. There were very few adult ducks present on this date.

B. Upland Game Birds. During the May 28 census, 3 cock pheasant crows were heard, indicating at least a remnant population of this species.
III. Refuge Development and Maintenance.

A. **Physical Development.** The dam, spillway and gates all appear to be in good condition. There are minor leaks through the gates. The bridge and wooden wing walls are in poor condition.

IV. Other Items

A. **Items of Interest.** Field work reported herein conducted by the writer.

Prepared by:

Report Completed: September 10, 1963

Harold F. Duebbert

Regional Office Approval