

BRANCH OF WILDLIFE REFUGES NARRATIVE REPORTS

MR. SALYER _____

MISS BAUM _____

MR. CRAWFORD _____

Operations

MR. REGAN NR _____

MR. DeMONT PAD _____

Land Management

~~MR. ACKERKNECHT~~ CS _____

DR. MORLEY Lem _____

Habitat Improvement

MR. BANKO _____

MR. STILES S _____

MR. KUDICHEK _____

Stenographers

REFUGE BURFORD LAKE

PERIOD JAN- APR 1958

BURFORD LAKE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

NARRATIVE REPORT

JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL

1958

PERSONNEL:

Charles R. Bryant, Refuge Manager
Don E. Redfearn, Assistant Refuge Manager
Mrs. V. Fay Pope, Clerk-Typist

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I. GENERAL

A. Weather Conditions.

No weather data has been received from the Jicarilla Indian Agency in Dulce, New Mexico. However, it has undoubtedly been a wet spring on this area because the area lying just outside the reservation boundary was so wet that air drops had to be made to isolated families that could not get out except by foot or horseback. Some families were stranded for as long as thirty days.

Travel to the Burford Lake area was not attempted until the last week of the quarter. We were then the first vehicle to cover the entire route and it is doubtful we could have gone in even a week earlier.

It appears that another wet year will be forthcoming for the area.

B. Habitat Conditions.1. Water.

The Vigils report more water in Burford Lake this spring than anytime during the past 15 - 20 years. The water level extends to within approximately 100 yds. of the fence at the extreme West end of the Vigil flat. The water level has probably risen some 8 - 10 feet during the period. The lake is about 85% of capacity and covers approximately 1200 - 1300 acres.

Stone Lake filled to capacity during the period and spilled in two places. The original spill area by the diversion dike silted up enough that water also spilled at the South end of the lake. As soon as conditions permit a channel will need to be dug so water will once again spill into the lake rather than being bypassed at the diversion. The water level continues at 100% of maximum at the end of the period.

Embom Lake is 100% of capacity at close of the period.

Horse Lake is approximately 90% of maximum and covers about 550 acres. Water depth has increased 12 - 15 feet during the period. Considerable amount of water continues to drain into the lake at the end of the period.

Hayden Lake contains approximately 50 acres of surface water and has 100% of maximum. Water spilled during the period and water depth increased about 10 - 12 feet.

Dulce Lake is 100% of maximum and is spilling about 3 - 4 c.f.s. and has risen approximately 12 - 15 feet during the period.

LaJara Lake lacks about 3 feet of being at maximum level. Water depth increased 8 - 10 feet and now covers about 260 acres.

2. Food and Cover.

There appears to be ample food on all the lakes so far as bottom growths of submergent types are concerned. Also, the newly flooded areas are providing excellent feeding areas for the dabbling ducks.

The shoreline growths that made good progress last year are all under water at this time with the exception of those on Embom Lake.

Cover does not exist on Dulce, LaJara, Hayden, and Stone Lakes. There are small areas at the mouth of draws on Burford, Horse, and Embom Lakes that provide some cover, but generally these lakes are also without any vegetative cover. This lack of cover will no doubt have a profound effect on the duck nesting this year.

The present water conditions should aid in establishing good shoreline growths of emergents, providing of course that excessive use by cattle and sheep does not keep the shores barren.

II. WILDLIFE

A. Migratory Birds.

At the close of the period there were approximately 2500 ducks and 970 coot on all the lakes with the biggest concentrations on Stone and Burford Lakes. Ruddy, Shoveler, and Gadwall were the most predominant species. This population, for the most part, is probably the resident summer population.

Coots have commenced nesting on Hayden Lake only and no sign of a duck nest has been observed on any of the lakes.

G. Fish.

Trout have once again been stocked in LaJara Lake. This was necessary because all of last year's population was killed off by a flash flood.

III. REFUGE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

No development or maintenance was carried on during the period.

IV. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

A. Grazing.

The range is in good condition and the moisture received should insure good range throughout the summer. Cattle and sheep continue to keep all shoreline vegetation grazed down to a minimum and until such a time that these lakes can be fenced, it is doubtful if duck production will ever reach maximum on the area.

V. FIELD INVESTIGATION OR APPLIED RESEARCH

None carried on during the period.

VI. PUBLIC RELATIONS

Contact was made with various members of the Indian Service regarding operations on the refuge.

VII. OTHER ITEMS

A. Items of Interest.

We have ascertained from brief discussions with the Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Rennie, and with Mr. Gomer, Range Conservationist and person in charge of wildlife for the Reservation, that the Jicarilla Tribe is interested in wildlife only so long as it has as economic return to the tribe. At the present time the tribe is deeply interested in stocking elk and building up their deer and turkey population in an effort to commercialize the hunting by charging large fees for a permit to hunt on the reservation.

Another of their plans at this time is to construct a large dike at the mouth of the drainage area just to the south of Stone Lake. The impounded water would have maximum depth of 35 - 40 feet and they would stock this lake with fish with the idea of commercializing the area.

The late waterfowl season in New Mexico drastically reduces the amount of waterfowl shooting possible on the area and for this reason the tribe has little or no interest in waterfowl management on the reservation.

We feel the lakes on the reservation have a definite potential for relatively high production of waterfowl only if we could fence them off from livestock use.

By keeping in mind the commercialized attitude of the Apaches, we feel the only alternative for our continued management of the waterfowl resource on a sound basis is to lease the immediate lake areas and thereby have full management control.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated May 13, 1958

Don E. Redfearn
Don E. Redfearn
Asst. Refuge Manager

Approved by:

Charles R. Bryant
Charles R. Bryant
Refuge Manager

Approved by Regional Office:

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William T. Kummerow
Chief, Division of Wildlife

NR Forms 1, 1A, 2 and 4

Information is not available for the period January through April 1958.