

Crescent Lake Refuge

Summary

Activities for the Month of October

1937

By

G.E.Wardwell

Refuge Manager

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Foreword;

While this is headed as a summary of the work for the month of October, I can only outline the activities from the 15 to the 31, or since my arrival at this refuge.

Weather;

October 15 to 18- light rains with cold winds, 18- snow with .64 precipitation. The balance of the month was clear with cold nights and sunny days, thus making the working conditions ideal.

WPA Activities;

Great difficulties are being experienced in keeping our assignments up to full strength. At no time during this month have we had our full quota of men. Owing to the change of managers of this unit, work has been somewhat disrupted.

Auto Gates;

This project is now completed with the exception of a few minor details, such as connecting the fence wires to the gates. These gates are constructed of concrete and railroad iron on all roads, while plank was used on the minor fence openings.

These gates are very well constructed, very substantial, and will be free from trouble for many years.

Office Building;

Work has been progressing very slowly on this project, as only unexperienced men are available. Plumbing is being done by "handy men".

Savaged materials are being used whenever possible. The sewer pipes are taken from the dismantled C C C camp. This salvaging being done at the same time of construction, tends to slow up the work on this job. I shall rush the completion of this project as fast as possible.

Telephone Lines;

The telephone line extending from Headquarters to the overnight cabin some 15 miles to the East boundary of the refuge, was found down and broken in many places. This line had never been repaired since its completion by the CCC Camp here in 1934, except to coil up the wire when found broken and dragged away from the line by stock. The line is now being repaired and the phones put into serviceable condition.

Equipment;

Many hours show on the WPA report for the month of October as being spent on the repair of equipment. Namely: Ford Pickup, Dodge Dump Truck, and Electric Light Plant. In all of these cases this equipment had to be taken to expert mechanics for repairs. The Dodge Truck was being used without generator nor brakes; the Ford without second gear, with broken spring, and with a defective carburetor. while the Light Plant was beyond running. Its wrist pins were worn out, valves stuck and badly pitted, and the oil ring was broken allowing gasoline to run into the crankcase.

All this equipment is now being repaired.

Clean- up;

This will be a major project for some time. The moving of unsightly piles of salvaged materials from where it had been thrown at the West end of the drive-way beside the barn and garage, to a place which is being prepared behind the equipment shed. This material is being graded. The better lumber is being piled on a platform built for that purpose, and the worthless lumber which will later be cut into fire-wood, is being piled in like manner on another platform. This entire area will be cleaned up and all materials now stored there will be moved and stored in buildings, or piled in a neat manner behind the barn and equipment shed.

Predator Control;

This very important project was delayed until the last few days of the month, owing to the difficulties of finding a man experienced enough in this line work, who could be assigned to this project. His time so far has been mostly spent in making trap pins and setting out the traps. However, he has taken two trips over the trap line and has caught 7 skunks and 2 civit cats. As soon as time will permit, I shall instruct this man in the method of coyote trapping.

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Well and Lake Gauge Readings;

There are thirty-three wells to read the water levels, and sixteen lake gauges to read, which are at the present taking two full days of the refuge manager's time. Because of the road conditions over the refuge, this trip is necessarily made in low and second gear.

This is one of the reasons for the seemingly undue expense on the Ford- Pick-up. This car being equipped with air wheels, is the only car we have that will make these gauge-reading trips with any degree of safety, through the loose sand encountered on the refuge at this dry period. of the year. WPA labor was tried on these gauge readings but proved so very unsatisfactory that in most of the cases it was necessary to retake the readings.

Waterfowl;

Because of the limited time since my arrival here, and being unfamiliar with the district, this estimate now being submitted may not be as accurate as I will try to have in the future. But believe a conservative estimate of waterfowl now using this refuge to be about 150,000, with Mallards predominating and Shovellers, Green-wing Teal, and Gadwall next in order.

A few Canvasbacks and Redheads were observed, also some Ruddy and Buffleheads, but not over 50 in the aggregate were seen.

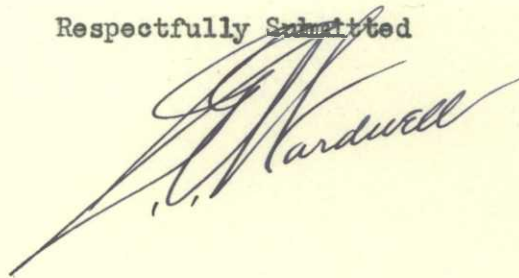
Very few Canada Geese are seen on the area. One band of 28 were decoyed into Gimlet Lake by our tame decoys, but only remained a few hours. Another band of about the same number were seen on Round-up Lake and a few small bands on Crescent Lake.

A very interesting point observed was the concentration of one specie of ducks using one lake. On two visits to Swan Lake several thousand ducks, all Shovellers, were seen. At Round-up, all Mallards,

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while at Hackberry Lake a heavy concentration of Green Wing Teal were seen. On the other lakes all the species were seen feeding together. Very few Baldpate and Pintail are now on this refuge, leading me to believe the birds here now are purely a local concentration and that the Northern birds will not arrive until after a general storm.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "J. H. Kardwell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.