

BRANCH OF WILDLIFE REFUGES

NARRATIVE REPORT

ROUTING SLIP

DATE. _____, 195

Mr. Salyer *last*

Mr. Belmont *PAH*

Mr. ~~Arundel~~

Miss Baum

Section of Operations:

~~Mr. Hall~~

Dr. Morley

~~Mr. Hogan~~ *WHE*

Section of Habitat Improvement:

~~Mr. Reddick~~ *REG 10-6*

~~Mr. Stiles~~ *CHK*

~~Mr. Deane~~ *WGB 10-5*

Mr. Stiles *W.S.*

Section of Land Management:

~~Mr. Ackerman~~ *WA*

~~Mr. Tarr~~

Stenographers:

Jmm 11/29

REFUGE

CRESCENT LAKE & NORTH PLATTE

PERIOD

MAY-AUGUST, 1954

CRESCENT LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

AND

NORTH PLATTE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

REFUGE NARRATIVE REPORT

May, June, July, August

1954

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* Lloyd R. Ramelli, Refuge Manager *
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* Patrick J. Kennedy, Maintenance Man *
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* Harley F. Modlin, Refuge Clerk *
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

ELLSWORTH, NEBRASKA

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N A R R A T I V E R E P O R T

CRESCENT LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Period ending September 1, 1954

I. GENERAL

A. Weather Conditions:

This quarter contained practically all the weather elements. Starting out on the first of May two inches of snow fell and temperatures dropped to 15° above the night of May second. The unseasonably warm weather latter part of April had trees and shrubbery advanced beyond their normal growth for this time of year. They were thrown back to an early April status. Inquiry over a large area shows fruit trees to have suffered severely from this cold spell.

Snow and freezing temperatures aren't unusual for early May in Western Nebraska. Strangers, alarmed over such weather, were told it wasn't a late winter; we just had an early spring.

Going into second month of the quarter the cold front left us and "watermelon weather" appeared. Temperatures through out the month were mostly pleasant and favored small grain. Barometric disturbances were frequent through June, and general rains covered large areas over the refuge and vicinity. Hail fell on three occasions during the month, with little damage.

Eight shower-thunderstorm periods in June-though not heavy at one time-accumulated to amounts that were adequate to meet the moisture requirements. A total of 3.24 inches being recorded for June. Predominantly warm, dry weather and less than the usual of storm activity existed thru July and August. This hot weather accelerated corn growth. The hay crop on the refuge land was slightly above last year's growth, and reports from permittees are the opposite. Feed value remains up to par.

According to Weather Bureau at Lincoln, this was the driest July since 1936 and the sixth driest on record. On the 11th of July temperatures climbed to 105° here, and the following two days were 101°. Of the 31 days maximum readings were in the 90's for 23 days; 3 days of 100° or better; leaving only 5 days of the

month below 90 degrees.

Weather data below taken from refuge records maintained by personnel daily:

	Precipitation	Snow	Max.	Min.
May	1.33	2.0 in.	89	15
June	3.24	0	102	40
July	2.07	0	105	46
August	1.66	0	102	47
TOTAL	8.30	2.0		

B. Water Conditions:

Shortage of snow during the winter months, coupled with a hot dry summer, affected our ground water, lake levels and potholes.

Test well readings for this period of one year ago give a tenth of an inch lower reading than present ones. All small pot-holes have remained dry, except for short periods when a local thunderstorm would fill them. Low water marks of approx. 10 inches can be seen on bulrushes and reeds in several of the lakes.

All the shore lines on our lakes are very distinct, and on lakes where a peninsula or small neck protruded we find barren ground. At end of period lakes are still at their lowest levels, although the supply to waterfowl use is sufficient in them.

C. Fires:

We are quite fortunate in that none of our many lightning storms started any fires during the period. Several fires were started in the neighboring community.

II. WILDLIFE

A. Migratory Birds:

1. Populations and Behavior:

The peak of our spring migration had passed northward during

the preceding period, and by the first of May populations were fast approaching our summer resident status.

Populations soon settled and were noticeably more stable than usual. Only seldom were ducks noted in flight between lakes until the young of the year began to try their wings. Blue-winged Teal were the first species to flock together for migration. Populations built up rapidly from August 10 until August 25, when a peak of 7,000 birds were noted. On the 26 August we lost 2,000 birds to migration. Pintails also showed a rapid buildup during the last week of the period. Mallards were the only other species that showed a migrational increase by the end of the period.

Waterfowl pair and brood data is presented in the following table. It will be readily noted that this has been the most fruitful year for some time in waterfowl production. The information used was obtained from pair and brood observations and during the course of routine refuge duties. Due to lack of funds only one aerial census was made.

Species	Resident Population	Resident Pairs	Broods	Brood Size	Production
				*	
Mallard	1200	504	306	6.52	1995
Gadwall	750	156	105	7.09	744
Pintail	800	126	73	6.10	445
G-W Teal	250	42	32	6.07	194
B-W Teal	2000	627	470	6.80	3196
Shoveller	1000	171	118	6.33	747
Redhead	250	75	55	6.31	347
Canvasback	50	6	4	6.00	24
Scaup	50	12	8	5.88	47
Ruddy	1000	189	187	5.34	998
					<u>8737</u>
Coot	2050	175	246	3.87	942

2. Food and Cover:

While lower lake levels and fewer potholes lessened the water area, there has been no appreciable difference in production of food and cover. These items continue to be more than adequate for refuge populations.

3. Disease:

We are fortunate in that botulism did not break out this year. With lowering waters coupled with the hot weather of July and August, we were apprehensive of an epidemic.

B. Upland Game Birds:

1. Populations and Behavior:

Like our waterfowl, upland game birds have enjoyed the most productive season since the '49 blizzard.

Sharp-tail Grouse: Our most plentiful bird in this category. We have produced an approximate 40 broods this year, as compared to 35 last year. Survival has been excellent. After the cold blizzard during early May there was very little hazard to nesting birds from weather.

Prairie Chicken: Broods reached an estimated 15 this year as compared to 10 broods in 1952 and 8 broods in 1953. Brood survival has been excellent.

Pheasants: Apparently have made an above-average increase of the past several years. Whether this will have a noticeable effect on our population remains to be seen. We are in what appears to be a static condition, with little or no increase or decrease for several years. This is not "pheasant country". The farm and wheat lands to the south of us are more to the liking of these birds.

2. Food and Cover:

Both food and cover are adequate for existing populations of upland game.

3. Disease:

We have not observed any indications of disease during the period.

C. Big Game Animals:

1. Populations and Behavior:

Rocky Mountain Mule Deer: Have reasonable guarantee of their continued gradual increase, since at least 10 fawn were added to the herd. These deer do not all stay at home on the refuge. With

those that have been working off the refuge to surrounding areas, our increase has been considerably lessened.

Antelope: Are to be hunted in Garden County for the first time since the days of the pioneers. Populations have built up to where they can stand a restricted hunt as the state of Nebraska is providing this year. A 3-day hunt during mid-September is being allowed those hunters drawing a permit.

2. Food and Cover:

Both food and cover are adequate for our big game species.

3. Disease:

Not noted during the period.

D. Fur Animals, Predators and Other Mammals:

Muskrat: Populations cannot be viewed favorably, since from all appearances there has been but little, if any, increase this year. While die-offs have not been observed, there certainly has not been the increase we should normally expect. At this time it is doubtful if any trapping will be justified during the next winter.

Pocket Gophers: Continue to be our most destructive pest on range lands.

Coyotes: Remain at a low population from the intensive campaigns of several years ago. These campaigns were followed by an occasional station when requested by ranchers, which served to keep the populations at a reduced level.

Skunks: Are more noticeable than they have been in the past several years. They are taken as opportunity affords. Their greatest damage lies in predation on duck nests.

Raccoon: Still too plentiful and should be reduced even if a control campaign was necessary. This is the only hazard we have on our captive goose flock. There is no known instance where they have molested the adult birds; however, goose nests and goslings would be a ready prey for them.

E. Predaceous Birds:

An occasional marsh hawk is seen during the summer months. However, during the last part of August migrating birds swells

this population considerably. Prairie falcons, Sparrow hawks, Marsh hawks, and Rough-legged hawks became particularly common at that time.

Magpies have been occasionally noted; however, not in undue numbers.

Bullsnakes: Were taken as opportunity afforded. In all, 50 snakes were killed throughout the summer. They continue to be our number one predator of duck nests. If we could educate these snakes to let nests alone, we would then be able to retain the best mouse and small rodent control factors we have.

An interesting incident occurred on Smith Lake while Refuge Clerk Modlin was trying for a few bass. During the process of fishing, a 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ft. bullsnake was encountered in the middle of the lake. The snake immediately decided to climb aboard the boat. One can conservatively say that a furious battle ensued that ended with Modlin still in command of his ship and another snake in snake heaven. In all my experience with bullsnakes, this is the first time I have ever know of one to take to water.

F. Fish:

The south half of Smith Lake was opened to fishing from July 1 through Labor day. As expected, this lake received considerable attention despite its isolation and sandy and nearly inaccessible roads.

In all, 5074 fishermen were estimated to have used these waters, taking 10610 black bass and 250 black crappie. This data was derived from bag checks made on 32 days of the 68 days the lake was opened to fishing. Considering that this lake was open only during the hot summer months, we feel this average of 2.09 bass per man-day was a good record. Of course, there were those "sportsmen" that proclaimed I had all the fish up in the closed area, etc., etc.

In retrospect, this experiment was successful. Very little, if any, competition with waterfowl resulted. Aside from several instances of vandalism when signs were reversed and boundary signs were pushed over into the lake, the public was very cooperative. We did not find any instances where minnows were being used, and only a very few instances where other refuge regulations had been unintentionally violated.

Several have voiced their desires for an opening during the

months of May and June to take advantage of the better bass and crappie fishing at that time. This, of course, would better fishing, but would place fishing in a greater competition with waterfowl on this lake. Future management of this lake will be discussed with the various authorities during routine inspections.

III. REFUGE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

A. Physical Development and Maintenance:

Road repair on and adjacent to refuge was necessary on several occasions for travel to continue. The county made a friendly gesture by offering the use of an old dump truck. With refuge personnel doing all the driving and loading of this truck, approx. 100 loads of dirt and clay were put into blowouts. Neighbors appeared with shovels, tractors, small "cat" and with refuge grader the road was made passable for awhile.

Continuous battle of "man vs. weeds" throughout the period. If one forgets lawns or roadside grass too long, he only makes it harder for himself to mow down later. It is believed these weeds and lawns, when over-looked, deliberately grow to extra heights for attention.

The dead willow trees scattered around the headquarters area are still being dropped, chopped and hauled away. We have received advice, tools to use, etc., from visitors while in the act of knocking these trees down; but for unknown reasons, the speaker never offered any physical action, leaving us plenty of muscle-building material.

Posting of refuge lakes that were open to fishing this quarter required extra carpenter work, painting, digging and traveling. Signs of approx. 3 ft. by 4 ft. pertaining to fishing regulations and camping were constructed and erected at four main gates. Other signs of various sizes were placed according to location and name.

Septic tanks and grease tanks were repaired and cleaned. The material used on one grease trap collapsed under the heavy chemical reaction during past few years and was replaced with new parts.

Captive geese herd, horses, and an occasional stray deer or antelope all require time, water, and sometime scolding when they hang around the headquarters area.

Cattle are counted off and on refuge as permits allow. This

seems such a small chore, but to find a certain gate over a certain hill over 10 to 15 miles of sand in a jeep is more punishment than a day spent at Macys bargain counter.

Telephone and lines received repairs and general maintenance. Each lightning storm means there will be action on the line.

Two trips were made to the Squaw Creek Refuge, Sumner, Mo. The Manager made the first venture with the old "40 Chev. truck" after the wheat. On his return trip trouble began with a flat and then wheel bearings, but necessary emergency repairs made and trip finally completed. Mechanic on his trip after wheat made minor repair starting out and came back as scheduled.

Maintenance of vehicles and equipment consumed a large portion of time this quarter. Our parts arrived for the road grader, and with ingenuity, arc welder, and skinned knuckles Mr. Kennedy made them all fit and workable.

IV. ECONOMIC USE

A. Grazing:

Grazing was somewhat retarded by the cool weather of May and early June. This resulted in grazing being postponed until June 1 to give our ranges the opportunity of a good start for the season's use. The hot weather of late June, July, and August was supplemented by periodic rains that brought the range and meadow lands into good shape.

Summer grazing units will be in good condition at the end of the season. Hay permittees have all harvested several more stacks of hay than any of the previous years, so our winter grazing should be amply provided for.

B. Buildings:

Quarters #6, more commonly known as the Jones place, was again rented to Mr. Bandy under special use permit for his use in conjunction with unit #19.

V. FIELD INVESTIGATION

A. Canadian Goose Project:

This project has been progressing, more slowly than our

patience would like; however, on schedule as far as nature would provide. We banded and released our "first home grown" goose. Considering that nearly all of our geese were only 2 years old last spring, this is a satisfactory status.

A known 8 pairs attempted or did nest during the past season. Four nests were known to be small nests of 1 and 2 eggs, none of which hatched. Three of these nests were incubated until hatching time approached and then abandoned. Two of these nests were then checked, both contained unhatched eggs. The remaining nest was not incubated at all. Of the remaining four nests, one contained 4 eggs, the other three were not located.

Three broods were noted, one with one gosling, one with two goslings, and one with six goslings. We have been able to catch one gosling, which was banded and allowed to fly.

We feel optimistic about the future of this goose flock, since next season will find our birds 3 years of age and approaching the age when they normally mate.

We have been laying the "ground work" to get more young birds. This will serve to keep our captive geese in a young and healthy state, as well as further the opportunity to mate for those geese that do not find a mate in the present flock.

B. Improvement of Gimlet Enclosure:

Continuing with our efforts to improve the Gimlet enclosure for the captive geese, we issued a permit for hay to be cut and stacked. This provided fresh young growing grass on the pasture that had grown up to tall and more coarse vegetation by mid-July. The geese readily used this new grass.

C. Banding:

Only one Canadian Goose was banded during the period. This was one of our young geese we were able to capture.

D. Range Survey:

The Soil Conservation Service has turned over the Range Plan to us for completion. Much map work remains to be done. Information and data continues to be collected for our new Economic Use Plan to be made during the next winter.

E. Lake Survey:

There was no more work done on our lakes by fishery personnel

Looks like
a total of
9. The NR-1
says 5.

to determine the possibilities of lake improvement.

At this time our program of lake improvement by treating Crane Lake with a fish tox to remove the carp is delayed pending a decision by our legal department on whether this work is contrary to State law. It is hard to conceive of a conservation agency retaining and interpreting a law that was made years ago to prevent individuals from taking fish by poison as now forbidding the use of a fish tox to treat a lake that is rendered utterly useless by carp and trash fish when by such removal would result in an ideal fishing, as well as productive waterfowl lakes. This is the face of the results of such activities in any number of progressive States during the past ten years.

VI. PUBLIC RELATIONS

A. Recreational Uses:

Fishing ranked first as recreational use during the period. An estimated 5500 fisherman days were spent on the refuge. Of these, 5074 days were spent fishing for black bass on Smith Lake, and the remainder spent fishing for the stunted bullheads in Island Lake.

Sightseers and picnickers accounted for an additional 500 days' use. This includes 3 school picnics and 2 church outings.

Several bird watchers called at the refuge and were conducted or directed over the refuge.

B. Refuge Visitors:

- 5/9-10/54. Game Agent McClure of Columbus, Nebr., visiting the refuge on official business.
- 5/14/54 Agent McClure returns to headquarters and picks up his car that was left here on his previous visit.
- 5/16-17/54 Harlan Morgan, USGMA, official visit, patrols Smith Lake.
- 5/22-23/54 Supervisor Davis, Regional Office, with Agent McClure of Kearney, Nebr., patrol the Smith-Martin area.
- 6/3/54 Agent Morgan, North Platte, going over prosecution procedures with Manager Ramelli.
- 6/7-8/54 Messrs. Griffith, Control Office; Gillett, Rollings, Regional Office; and M. C. Hammond, Refuge Biologist,

inspection, economic use, range conditions and habitat improvement.

- 6/9/54 Mr. Best, Nebr. Dept. of Roads & Irrigation, checking refuge maps for road surveys.
- 6/20/54 Mr. Bell, Bureau of Entomology, Pierre, South Dakota, accompanied by County Agent Wm. Main, visiting the refuge headquarters and grounds.
- 7/13/54 Soil Conservation Service personnel from Oshkosh, Nebr., with manager making survey of possibility of harvesting switch grass seed.
- 8/19/54 M. C. Hammond, Biologist, Upham, N. D., and Milt Weller, Univ. of Mo., gathering data from refuge records on nesting studies and brood counts.

C. Refuge Participation:

- 5/20-21/54 Manager attends Nebr. Federation of Wildlife Clubs at Kearney, Nebr.
- 5/25-27/54 Manager in attendance at Association of Midwest Fish and Game Law Enforcement Officers at Omaha, Nebr.

Refuge personnel attend GOC meetings throughout the period.

The refuge manager regularly attended Rotary meetings held each Monday evening at Oshkosh, Nebr.

Boy Scout activities of the manager took the usual extra time throughout the period.

Chamber of Commerce meetings were attended as the club met at Oshkosh.

Attendance at the Oshkosh Safety Club was made as duties and time allowed throughout the period.

The manager showed kodachrome slides of the various refuges on six different occasions. These showings included Rotary Club, community groups, and private parties.

D. Violations:

Six men were apprehended fishing on Smith Lake on May 16.

All the defendants were from Alliance, Nebr., and were unquestionably aware that these were closed waters. Nevertheless, their wails have been long and loud, supplemented with letters.

Dr. Burchell

The U. S. Attorney's office continues its weak-kneed attitude towards all game cases. It is therefore extremely doubtful if these cases will be even tried.

Needless to say, this has caused considerable resentment from no small proportion of the law-abiding citizens. It is more than just a little embarrassing to try to explain to a citizen who likes to fish as well as anyone else and yet respects us and our regulations as to why an iron-clad case such as this is going by without prosecution. Obviously, our obligations to the several thousands of law abiding citizens who respect us and our cause and tries to do what is right was certainly not considered in the handling of this case.

VII. OTHER ITEMS

A. Items of Interest:

Oil talk has died down. It went down with the drilling of 2 dry holes to the south of the refuge. Considerably local cash went down those holes, and since money talks, we haven't been hearing too much lately.

A surface road was approved from Lisco to Antioch. Local ranchers organized, formed a tax district, and thus provided for the road. This road will be about 10 miles west of headquarters and should be completed and ready for use sometime next year. It will aid travel to Alliance considerably.

Joe Kennedy, Refuge Mechanic, had mail forwarded to the local hospital during May, virus pneumonia.

Clerk Modlin and family made a slow cruise in May through the Carolinas, Va., and Florida visiting the "kin folks," including his father and sister, whom he had not seen for 17 years.

B. Photographs:

The enclosed photographs were taken by the manager during the course of refuge activities.

C. Crescent Lake Irrigation Interests:

With the advent of an exceptionally dry year and resulting lack of snow pack in Colorado and Wyoming, the irrigation interests in Nebraska were severely taxed for sufficient water for irrigation needs.

The various irrigation ditch companies using Blue Creek water have done considerable speculating as to the possibility of exploiting further the sandhill lakes. The foremost project is the lowering of the canal between Blue and Crescent Lake by an additional 3 feet. I am reliably informed that considerable discussion was also held regarding the possibilities of tapping such lakes as Jones, Swan and even Island and Crane lakes.

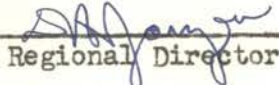
None of this has reached the stage of action. However, if another year or so of low irrigation waters comes to pass, I am sure we will be confronted with at least a part of these problems.

Sections I, III, VI were written by Mr. Modlin. He is also responsible for the cover ornamentation, as well as the typing of this report.

Respectfully submitted


Lloyd R. Ramelli
Refuge Manager

Date: September 17, 1954

Approved: 
Regional Director

Date: 9/23/54

WATERFOWL
(Continuation Sheet)

REFUGE Crescent Lake Refuge

MONTHS OF May TO August, 19 54

(1) Species	(2) Weeks of reporting period								(3) Estimated waterfowl days use	(4) Production :Broods:Estimated seen : total	
	7/17 11	7/24 12	7/31 13	8/7 14	8/14 15	8/21 16	8/28 17	8/31 18			
Swans:											
Whistling											
Trumpeter											
Geese:											
Canada											
Cackling											
Brant											
White-fronted											
Snow											
Blue											
Other											
Ducks:											
Mallard	1200	1200	1200	1200	3200	3200	3200	4000	3,600,000	306	1995
Black											
Gadwall	750	750	750	750	1500	1500	1500	1500	1,975,000	105	744
Baldpate											
Pintail	800	800	800	800	1250	1250	4000	6000	2,770,000	73	445
Green-winged teal	250	250	250	250	450	450	450	450	535,000	32	194
Blue-winged teal	2000	2000	2000	2000	5200	5200	7000	5000	5,925,000	490	33196
Cinnamon teal											
Shoveler	1000	1000	1000	1000	1750	1750	1750	1750	2,540,000	118	747
Wood											
Redhead	250	250	250	250	600	600	600	600	705,000	55	347
Ring-necked											
Canvasback	50	50	50	50	75	75	75	75	120,000	4	24
Scaup	50	50	50	50	100	100	100	100	132,000	8	47
Goldeneye											
Bufflehead											
Ruddy	1000	1000	1000	1000	2000	2000	2000	2000	2,640,000	187	998
Other											
Coot:	2050	2050	2050	2050	3000	3000	3000	3000	4,900,000	246	942

(over)

	(5) Total Days Use	(6) Peak Number	(7) Total Production
Swans	:	:	:
Geese	:	:	5 *
Ducks	21,042,000	21,475	8,757
Coots	4,900,000	3,000	:

* Young from captive Canada Geese.

SUMMARY

Principal feeding areas Refuge Lakes

Principal nesting areas Refuge Lakes

Reported by

Lloyd R. Amelli
Lloyd R. Amelli

INSTRUCTIONS (See Secs. 7531 through 7534, Wildlife Refuges Field Manual)

- (1) Species: In addition to the birds listed on form, other species occurring on refuge during the reporting period should be added in appropriate spaces. Special attention should be given to those species of local and national significance.
- (2) Weeks of Reporting Period: Estimated average refuge populations.
- (3) Estimated Waterfowl Days Use: Average weekly populations x number of days present for each species.
- (4) Production: Estimated number of young produced based on observations and actual counts on representative breeding areas. Brood counts should be made on two or more areas aggregating 10% of the breeding habitat. Estimates having no basis in fact should be omitted.
- (5) Total Days Use: A summary of data recorded under (3).
- (6) Peak Number: Maximum number of waterfowl present on refuge during any census of reporting period.
- (7) Total Production: A summary of data recorded under (4).

3-1751
Form NR-1A
(Aug. 1952)

MIGRATORY BIRDS
(Other than Waterfowl)
Months of May to Sept. 1954

Refuge Crescent Lake

(1) Species	(2) First Seen		(3) Peak Concentration		(4) Last Seen		(5) Production			(6) Total
Common Name	Number	Date	Number	Inclusive Dates	Number	Date	Number Colonies	Total # Nests	Total Young	Estimated Use
I. <u>Water and Marsh Birds:</u>										
Eared Grebe	Summer	Resident	100	5/1-8/	Still present				100	
Western Grebe	"	"	250	"	"				100	
Pied-billed Grebe	"	"	100	"	"				100	
White Pelican	"	"	100	"	"					
Double Crested Cormorant	"	"	200	"	"		1	70	200	
Great Blue Heron	"	"	200	"	"		1	75	250	
American Egret	"	"	5	"	"			None nesting		
B. C. night Heron	"	"	500	"	"				750	
American Bittern	"	"	500	"	"				250	
Virginia Rail	1	"	1500	"	"				1000	
II. <u>Shorebirds, Gulls and Terns:</u>										
KILLDEER	"	"	500	"	"				250	
LONG-BILLED CURLEW	"	"	800	"	2	8/13			100	
UPLAND PLOVER	"	"	200	"	Still present					
WESTERN WILLET	"	"	200	"	"					
RING-BILLED GULL	"	"	2000	"	"					
FOSTERS TERN	"	"	2000	"	"					
BLACK TERN	"	"	2000	"	"					
AVOCET	"	"	1500	"	"					

(over)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
III. <u>Doves and Pigeons:</u> Mourning dove White-winged dove	Summer Resident 1200	5/15-8/15	100	8/31	125 300
IV. <u>Predaceous Birds:</u> Golden eagle Duck hawk Horned owl Magpie Raven Crow	Year long resident 25 " 50	Year long "		5 10	10 25
Reported by <u>Lloyd R. Hamell</u> Lloyd R. Hamell					

INSTRUCTIONS

(See Sec. 7532, Wildlife Refuges Field Manual)

- (1) Species: Use the correct names as found in the A.O.U. Checklist, 1931 Edition, and list group in A.O.U. order. Avoid general terms as "seagull", "tern", etc. In addition to the birds listed on form, other species occurring on refuge during the reporting period should be added in appropriate spaces. Special attention should be given to those species of local and National significance. Groups: I. Water and Marsh Birds (Gaviiformes to Ciconiiformes and Gruiformes)
II. Shorebirds, Gulls and Terns (Charadriiformes)
III. Doves and Pigeons (Columbiformes)
IV. Predaceous Birds (Falconiformes, Strigiformes and predaceous Passeriformes)
- (2) First Seen: The first migration record for the species for the reporting period.
- (3) Peak Numbers: Estimated number and inclusive dates when peak population of the species occurred.
- (4) Last Seen: The last refuge record for the species during the season concerned.
- (5) Production: Estimated number of young produced based on observations and actual counts.
- (6) Total: Estimated species days use (average population X no. days present) of refuge during the reporting period.

UPLAND GAME BIRDS

1613

Refuge Crescent Lake

Months of May to Sept. 54, 194

* FORM NR-2 - UPLAND GAME BIRDS *

(1) Species	(2) Density		(3) Young Produced		(4) Sex Ratio	(5) Removals			(6) Total	(7) Remarks
Common Name	Cover types, total acreage of habitat	Acres per Bird	Number broods obs'd.	Estimated Total	Percentage	Hunting	For Re- stocking	For Research	Estimated number using Refuge	Pertinent information not specifically requested. List introductions here.
Ring necked Pheasant	40,000		5	45					200	
Sharp tail Grouse	40,000		40	240					1000	
Prairie Chicken	40,000		15	90					300	

INSTRUCTIONS

Form NR-2 - UPLAND GAME BIRDS.*

- (1) SPECIES: Use correct common name.
- (2) DENSITY: Applies particularly to those species considered in removal programs (public hunts, etc.). Detailed data may be omitted for species occurring in limited numbers. Density to be expressed in acres per animal by cover types. This information is to be prefaced by a statement from the refuge manager as to the number of acres in each cover type found on the refuge; once submitted, this information need not be repeated except as significant changes occur in the area of cover types. Cover types should be detailed enough to furnish the desired information but not so much as to obscure the general picture. Examples: spruce swamp, upland hardwoods, reverting agriculture land, bottomland hardwoods, short grass prairie, etc. Standard type symbols listed in Wildlife Management Series No. 7 should be used where possible. Figures submitted should be based on actual observations and counts on representative sample areas. Survey method used and size of sample area or areas should be indicated under Remarks.
- (3) YOUNG PRODUCED: Estimated number of young produced, based upon observations and actual counts in representative breeding habitat.
- (4) SEX RATIO: This column applies primarily to wild turkey, pheasants, etc. Include data on other species if available.
- (5) REMOVALS: Indicate total number in each category removed during the report period.
- (6) TOTAL: Estimated total number using the refuge during the report period. This may include resident birds plus those migrating into the refuge during certain seasons.
- (7) REMARKS: Indicate method used to determine population and area covered in survey. Also include other pertinent information not specifically requested.

* Only columns applicable to the period covered should be used.

REFUGE GRAIN REPORT

This report should cover all grain on hand, received, or disposed of, during the period covered by this narrative report.

Report all grain in bushels. For the purpose of this report the following approximate weights of grain shall be considered equivalent to a bushel: Corn (shelled)—55 lb., corn (ear)—70 lb., wheat—60 lb., barley—50 lb., rye—55 lb., oats—30 lb., soy beans—60 lb., millet—50 lb., cowpeas—60 lb., and mixed—50 lb. In computing volume of granaries, multiply the cubic contents (cu. ft.) by 0.8 bushels.

- (1) List each type of grain separately and specifically, as flint corn, yellow dent corn, square deal hybrid corn, garnet wheat, red May wheat, durum wheat, spring wheat, proso millet, combine milo, new era cowpeas, mikado soy beans, etc. Mere listing as corn, wheat, and soybeans will not suffice, as specific details are necessary in considering transfer of seed supplies to other refuges. Include only domestic grains; aquatic and other seeds will be listed on NR-9.
- (3) Report all grain received during period from all sources, such as transfer, share cropping, or harvest from food patches.
- (4) A total of columns 2 and 3.
- (6) Column 4 less column 5.
- (7) This is a proposed break-down by varieties of grain listed in column 6. Indicate if grain is suitable for seeding new crops.
- (8) Nearest railroad station for shipping and receiving.
- (9) Where stored on refuge: "Headquarters granary," etc.
- (10) Indicate here the source of grain shipped in, destination of grain transferred, data on condition of grain, unusual uses proposed.

NORTH PLATTE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

REFUGE NARRATIVE REPORT

Period ending August 31, 1954

I. GENERAL

A. Weather Conditions:

The weather of this refuge may be considered as the same as that supplied at the Crescent Lake Refuge.

B. Water Conditions:

Unlike the sandhills where the Crescent Lake Refuge is located, this area is dependent on irrigation waters only for its water. This was a very, very poor water year. The snow pack in Colorado and Wyoming was next to nothing last winter, with the result that these lakes were lowered to the minimum to even supply the minimum of water needed for crops. The levels listed below were taken as a part of the patrol trips made to this refuge:

Lake Minatare:

6/16/54	4113.80
6/29/54	4112.00
7/29/54	4103.00
8/11/54	4098.00

C. Fires:

One small fire broke out on Bureau of Reclamation lands during August. The Minatare fire department was called, and the fire was subdued after approximately 2 acres of grass land had burned.

II. WILDLIFE

A. Migratory Birds:

1. Populations and Behavior:

Resident populations were slightly higher this year, as we were able to list 200 ducks using the area as compared to only 50 of a year ago. These birds used the refuge for resting and

loafing and a certain amount of feeding, though generally feeding was done off of the refuge.

The few broods noted were restricted to the irrigation canals. Since these water levels fluctuate considerably during the manipulation for irrigation needs, there is little to encourage nesting.

Populations were not affected by fall movements of pintail and blue-wing teal at the end of the period.

2. Food and Cover:

These items are lacking on this refuge.

3. Disease:

We did not note any signs of disease during the period.

C. Big Game Animals:

Mule deer are occasionally noted in our patrols. About 15 deer use the refuge.

D. Fur Animals, Predators:

Raccoon are the only animals of this category noted on the lakes. Muskrat are occasionally noted along the canals. Due to the lack of nesting birds, very little damage is done by predators.

E. Predaceous Birds:

Magpies continue to make extensive use of the large popular trees.

F. Fish:

Fishing appears to become progressively worse. A few wall-eye pike and trout spurred activities and hopes, but few were taken. The lake is progressively increasing in carp.

III. REFUGE DEVELOPMENT

A. Physical Development:

Signs were replaced and fences around Lake Alice were repaired as needed.

Our annual planting of duck and goose pasture was accomplished during August. Two trips were made to the Squaw Creek Refuge to haul 200 bushels of wheat for planting. The seed was planted on the mud flats of the back areas of Lake Minatare.

We now have a beautiful crop of wheat coming up and no doubt will be of considerable value to our waterfowl during the hunting season.

Lake Minatare was planted instead of Lake Alice, since that lake is not subject to the raising and lowering of water levels during October as is Lake Alice. The soil is also better and more ideally located on Lake Minatare.

IV. ECONOMIC USE

Economic Use is regulated and administered by the Bureau of Reclamation and the Pathfinder Irrigation District.

V. PUBLIC RELATIONS

A. Recreational Use:

Fishing continues to decrease with the downward trend of fishing success, while watersports and picnicking continue to increase. An estimated 98,000 man-days' use were made of the refuge during the period.

As in the past, approximately 95% of the recreational use occurred on Lake Minatare.

B. Refuge Visitors:

There were no official guests on the refuge during the period. Refuge personnel made a total of 10 patrols over the refuge during the period. Irrigation officials at the lake and at Mitchell were contacted as necessary.

C. Violations:

There were no violators apprehended during the period.

VI. OTHER ITEMS

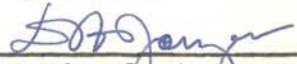
The State Game Warden, Mr. George Weidman, has resigned and left for California. He is replaced by Warden McCole, who has

been stationed at North Platte, Nebraska.

Respectfully submitted


Lloyd R. Ramelli
Refuge Manager

Date: 17 September 1954

Approved: 
Regional Director

Date: 9/22/54

3-7150a
Cont. NR-1
(Rev. March 1953)

WATERFOWL
(Continuation Sheet)

REFUGE North Platte

MONTHS OF May

TO August 31, 54, 1954

(1) Species	(2) Weeks of reporting period								(3) Estimated waterfowl days use	(4) Production Broods: Estimated seen: total	
	7/17 : 11	7/24 : 12	7/31 : 13	8/8 : 14	8/14 : 15	8/21 : 16	8/28 : 17	8/31 : 18			
<u>Swans:</u>											
Whistling											
Trumpeter											
<u>Geese:</u>											
Canada											
Cackling											
Brant											
White-fronted											
Snow											
Blue											
Other											
<u>Ducks:</u>											
Mallard	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	12,000	2	25
Black											
Gadwall											
Baldpate											
Pintail	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	6,000	1	10
Green-winged teal											
Blue-winged teal	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	3,000		
Cinnamon teal											
Shoveler	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	3,000		
Wood											
Redhead											
Ring-necked											
Canvasback											
Scaup											
Goldeneye											
Bufflehead											
Ruddy											
Other											
<u>Coot:</u>											

(over)

	(5) Total Days Use	(6) Peak Number	(7) Total Production	SUMMARY
Swans	:	:	0	Principal feeding areas <u>Canals</u>
Geese	:	:	0	
Ducks	24,000	200	35	Principal nesting areas <u>Canals</u>
Coots	:	:	0	

Reported by Lloyd R. Ramelli
Lloyd R. Ramelli - Refuge Mgr.

INSTRUCTIONS (See Secs. 7531 through 7534, Wildlife Refuges Field Manual)

- (1) Species: In addition to the birds listed on form, other species occurring on refuge during the reporting period should be added in appropriate spaces. Special attention should be given to those species of local and national significance.
- (2) Weeks of Reporting Period: Estimated average refuge populations.
- (3) Estimated Waterfowl Days Use: Average weekly populations x number of days present for each species.
- (4) Production: Estimated number of young produced based on observations and actual counts on representative breeding areas. Brood counts should be made on two or more areas aggregating 10% of the breeding habitat. Estimates having no basis in fact should be omitted.
- (5) Total Days Use: A summary of data recorded under (3).
- (6) Peak Number: Maximum number of waterfowl present on refuge during any census of reporting period.
- (7) Total Production: A summary of data recorded under (4).

3-1751
Form NR-1A
(Aug. 1952)

MIGRATORY BIRDS
(Other than Waterfowl)

Refuge North Platte

Months of May to August 54 195

(1) Species	(2) First Seen		(3) Peak Concentration		(4) Last Seen		(5) Production			(6) Total
Common Name	Number	Date	Number	Inclusive Dates	Number	Date	Number Colonies	Total # Nests	Total Young	Estimated Use
I. <u>Water and Marsh Birds:</u>										
Eared Grebe	Summer Resident		200	5/1-8/31	Summer Res.					
Western Grebe	"		25	"	"					
Double Crested Cormorant	"		25	"	"					
Great Blue Heron	"		25	"	"					

(over)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
III. <u>Doves and Pigeons:</u>					
Mourning dove	Summer Resident	100	5/15-8/31	Still present	25
White-winged dove					50
IV. <u>Predaceous Birds:</u>					
Golden eagle					
Duck hawk					
Horned owl	Year long Res.	25	5/1/8/31	Year long Res.	
Magpie	"	750	"	"	
Raven	"		"	"	
Crow	"	50	"	"	

Reported by

Lloyd R. Manelli
Lloyd R. Manelli, Refuge Mgr.

INSTRUCTIONS

(See Sec. 7532, Wildlife Refuges Field Manual)

- (1) Species: Use the correct names as found in the A.O.U. Checklist, 1931 Edition, and list group in A.O.U. order. Avoid general terms as "seagull", "tern", etc. In addition to the birds listed on form, other species occurring on refuge during the reporting period should be added in appropriate spaces. Special attention should be given to those species of local and National significance. Groups: I. Water and Marsh Birds (Gaviiformes to Ciconiiformes and Gruiformes)
II. Shorebirds, Gulls and Terns (Charadriiformes)
III. Doves and Pigeons (Columbiformes)
IV. Predaceous Birds (Falconiformes, Strigiformes and predaceous Passeriformes)
- (2) First Seen: The first migration record for the species for the reporting period.
- (3) Peak Numbers: Estimated number and inclusive dates when peak population of the species occurred.
- (4) Last Seen: The last refuge record for the species during the season concerned.
- (5) Production: Estimated number of young produced based on observations and actual counts.
- (6) Total: Estimated species days use (average population X no. days present) of refuge during the reporting period.

UPLAND GAME BIRDS

1613

Refuge North Platte Months of May to August 54, 194

(1) Species	(2) Density	(3) Young Produced	(4) Sex Ratio	(5) Removals			(6) Total	(7) Remarks	
Common Name	Cover types, total acreage of habitat	Acres per Bird	Number broods obs'd. Estimated Total	Percentage	Hunting	For Re- stocking	For Research	Estimated number using Refuge	Pertinent information not specifically requested. List introductions here.
Ring-necked Pheasant	3,000		2 40					50	
Sharp-tailed Grouse	3,000							25	

INSTRUCTIONS

Form NR-2 - UPLAND GAME BIRDS.*

- (1) SPECIES: Use correct common name.
- (2) DENSITY: Applies particularly to those species considered in removal programs (public hunts, etc.). Detailed data may be omitted for species occurring in limited numbers. Density to be expressed in acres per animal by cover types. This information is to be prefaced by a statement from the refuge manager as to the number of acres in each cover type found on the refuge; once submitted, this information need not be repeated except as significant changes occur in the area of cover types. Cover types should be detailed enough to furnish the desired information but not so much as to obscure the general picture. Examples: spruce swamp, upland hardwoods, reverting agriculture land, bottomland hardwoods, short grass prairie, etc. Standard type symbols listed in Wildlife Management Series No. 7 should be used where possible. Figures submitted should be based on actual observations and counts on representative sample areas. Survey method used and size of sample area or areas should be indicated under Remarks.
- (3) YOUNG PRODUCED: Estimated number of young produced, based upon observations and actual counts in representative breeding habitat.
- (4) SEX RATIO: This column applies primarily to wild turkey, pheasants, etc. Include data on other species if available.
- (5) REMOVALS: Indicate total number in each category removed during the report period.
- (6) TOTAL: Estimated total number using the refuge during the report period. This may include resident birds plus those migrating into the refuge during certain seasons.
- (7) REMARKS: Indicate method used to determine population and area covered in survey. Also include other pertinent information not specifically requested.

* Only columns applicable to the period covered should be used.



One of our captive goose flock broods



"Just dropped in to tell you what is
wrong with your fishing."



Irrigation canal leading from Crescent Lake.



Existing canal from Blue to Crescent Lakes.
This is the canal that the irrigation district
proposed to lower 3 feet to lower Blue lake
by that amount.



Fishermen and automobiles at Smith Lake.