



MONTHLY REPORT

SEPTEMBER 1937

LOWER SOURIS MIGRATORY WATERFOWL REFUGE

UPHAM, NORTH DAKOTA

CORDIA J. HENRY

ASS'T REFUGE MANAGER

SEP
1937

MONTHLY REPORT

SEPTEMBER 1937

September blesses the Prairies with the finest weather of the year. As the poet once said, "Then if ever come perfect days". September gives us a lull ^{between} before the heat of summer and the chill winds of winter.

From the standpoint of Refuge Development, September is again the ideal month. This last month has been no exception. We have had ideal travelling and working conditions, and have turned out a very respectable bit of work considering the extremely limited amount of men available.

The duck migration has been rather interesting. The first part of September was as might be expected; a very gradual disappearance of the locally reared birds. This exit reached a climax between the 17th and 22nd of September, at which time we had less ducks than at any time since the time when the area was first flooded (excepting, of course, the winters). At this time we probably had less than 10,000 ducks.

Beginning shortly after the 22nd, a decided increase was noticed, and by the end of the month we had at least four times as many as were here during the low period.

On the 29th of September we had a wet snowstorm from which we gained a fair amount of moisture. The ground is now fairly moist, and is in far better condition than it was at this time a year ago. We are pretty well set for a good run-off if we get the snow this winter.

MONTHLY REPORT

SEPTEMBER 1937

DAM 357

Undoubtedly the most noteworthy accomplishment of this month has been the practical completion of Dam 357. Because of the distance from camp, this project has been a troublesome one ever since it was started. It is with great relief that we announce that this work is well in hand, and that there remains only a little rip-rap work and clean-up work yet to be done.

Fencing

This very important project has been almost entirely neglected this summer because so many men had to be concentrated on Dam 357. However, we were able to make a very fair start again. We started fencing again where the W.P.A.'s left off last June in the Sandhills extension. The boys were able to complete five miles of fence, and nine miles were completed ready for wire; this is very good considering the fact that most of the line had to be cleared of brush. Also it was necessary to cement in a large number of steel posts to prevent their being pulled out, in the bottoms of the numerous sharp dips.

OVERNIGHT CABIN

In order to have a point at which to center our activities in the Sandhills, we moved in and rebuilt a small two-room house. This will also give our trappers a place to stay in when working in the Sandhills area. The cabin is located within a stones throw of the Sandhills lookout tower, and is in a very strategic location. This cabin, along with the associated buildings, should be completed next month.

MONTHLY REPORT

SEPTEMBER 1937

NURSERY

Almost everything has been in our favor in connection with the nursery development work. Although the irrigation system has not yet been installed, timely rains aided by a pump and hose have brought the plants through in fine shape. The best and most important thing of all is that the ground is thoroughly wet for the coming winter.

We are now planting the fall seed beds which include Cohon-easter, Buckthorn, Dwarf Maple, Choke-Cherry, Honeysuckle, Caragana, Russian Olive, Fragrant Sumac, etc.

The nursery pump has just been received, and we hope to be able to install it yet this year.

SEED COLLECTION

We have been unable to collect seeds this year as we have in the past, due to the lack of men. We managed to gather a few seeds of trees and shrubs for nursery culture. Also we spent considerable time in picking our seed corn. Only well-shaped, early-ripening ears were chosen. These were then hauled in to headquarters where they were carefully picked over. The seed ears were picked out and put on driers, while the others were thrown into a crib for feed.

HAY

Most of the hay has now been cut and stacked. In a few cases it has already been measured up and paid for. It certainly has been a wonderful help to me to have an extra man for the hay-ing season.

MOSTLY REPORT

SEPTEMBER 1937

COVER MAPPING

Our Biologist, Mr. Merrill C. Hammond, has continued the cover mapping work where Mr. Max Jensen left off. Three Sections were mapped this month. Ordinarily he could have done more, but part of his time was used on other work, and also the locality mapped was especially difficult.

BANDING

We hope and plan to band a consistent average of a thousand ducks a year. We have just completed a trap in which we should easily accomplish this. To date we have had but little time for this activity. For us, banding is necessarily more or less a spare time activity, as there is almost always something of more importance demanding our attention.

WATERFOWL PLANTINGS

For some reason, the Wild Rice absolutely refused to grow in the location in which it was so successful last year. It appeared sparsely in a few places where it had poor to moderate success last year, evidently re-seeding itself. Of our plantings this year, a very good stand resulted from the seeding done in the diversion channel north of Dam # 1.

The Bulrush root-stalk plantings were as usual highly successful. Other seedings of Bulrush, Smartweed, Sage, etc., gave us fair to good results.

The Wild Celery has not as yet shown that it has succeeded and it will probably be late next summer before we can be definitely certain.

MONTHLY REPORT

SEPTEMBER 1937

BOUNDARY MARKERS

One of our patrolmen, assisted by a CCC boy, put out several hundred boundary markers this month. In the fence line they were put in with the idea of permanency. However, due to the fact that a good share of the boundary is not yet fenced, it was necessary to erect temporary signs.

TRUCK TRAILS

Construction work on truck trails was continued, as much as possible with a little better than a mile completed.

STATE HIGHWAY 5 CROSSING

Work on this crossing continued, with the moving of 26,250 cubic yards of dirt.

GAUGING STATIONS

Construction work on the Nelson Bridge station was completed in September. Some progress was made with the Westhope station, but here we were very short of labor.

RUBBLE MASONRY DAMS

In order to provide control structures in Dams 1 & 2, a pneumatic hammer was used to make penings in both Dams. The flash-board structures are now being constructed. These controls will now give us a much needed means to regulate the water as suits our needs.

PHOTOGRAPHS



Picking
Seed
Corn.



Our seed corn was picked early, before most of the Corn was ripe. The choice of this early-ripening corn was then taken to headquarters, where it was carefully sorted and the seed ears picked out and put on driers.



Results of Blow-out Erosion Control. In the area shown here, there was not a bit of vegetation of any kind at the time erosion control was carried out in the winter of 1935-36. This same Blow-out is shown in my report of December 1935 under title, "A typical Blowout."





Additional Blow-out Control Photos. Notice the young Cottonwoods beginning to make an appearance.





One of our best wind-mills wrecked this summer by a small Cyclone.



Banding a Duck Hawk. This bird recovered from Botulism contracted on the Upper Souris Refuge. It was brought over here for a specimen, but fooled us and recovered.