BRANCH OF WILDLIFE REFUGES

NARRATIVE REPORT

ROUTING SLIP

DATE May 27, 1952

Mr. Salyer

~~Mr. DuMont~~ PAD 6-4

~~Mr. Krumes~~ WT

Miss Bourn MM

SECTION OF OPERATIONS:

~~Mr. Ball~~

~~Dr. Morley~~ Tom

~~Mr. Regan~~ MR

SECTION OF HABITAT IMPROVEMENT:

~~Mr. Griffith~~ JCG

~~Mr. Kubichek~~

~~Dr. Bourn~~ WSB

Mr. Stiles WBS

SECTION OF LAND MANAGEMENT:

~~Mr. Ackerknecht~~ OA

~~Mr. Davis~~ OAD

STENOGRAPHERS:

REFUGE North Dakota Easement District No. 6

PERIOD January-April, 1952

NORTH DAKOTA EASEMENT REFUGES - DISTRICT NO. 6

BONEHILL CREEK

CHASE LAKE

HALFWAY LAKE

HOBART LAKE

LAKE GEORGE

STONEY SLOUGH

TOMAHAWK LAKE

Since all of the easement refuges in this district happened to be in the heavy snowfall belt this winter, there was an unusally heavy run-off; this was especially true on the refuges in the heaviest snow belt area. Fortunately, not much damage occurred to water control structures as a whole.

This heavy run-off filled many sloughs in this section that had very little water last summer. However, since the month of April was dry with above normal temperatures, causing a great deal of evaporation, many areas dried up and others lowered considerably.

Waterfowl was slow in coming through in spite of the early spring. The duck flight was such that no flights were observed.

BONEHILL CREEK

The heaviest spring run-off that has ever occurred since the water control structures were put in, took place. For a short time water was flowing about 10 inches deep and 90 feet wide across the natural spillway. This heavy flow caused two washouts below the spillway; one about four hundred feet below and the other eight hundred feet below. If grazing had not been so severe in this pasture where the water flows no trouble may have developed. The slough to the south of the control structures was filled by the ditch from the main unit. More water came in than is desirable for good plant growth.

When inspected, pintails, mallards and mergansers were common. Nest cover and food conditions on the refuge is good for surface feeding ducks.

Upland game birds are scarce; a few pheasants and partridges have been observed.

Fur animals, rodents, etc. are well under control. However, a marked increase in field mice have been noted in this area.

CHASE LAKE

Water levels are up slightly above the high a year ago on the main units. Water conditions for the summer appear to be good even though the rainfall should be light. Structures are in fair condition. Some additional material is needed on the dam this summer.

Waterfowl made good use of the area during migration and many ducks are nesting on the area; nesting population appears to be down about 15 percent on pintails and mallards. The pelicans returned earlier than usual; they came into Arrowwood Lake on April 9th. California gulls appearred to be more common than a year ago and ring-billed gulls about the same. It is expected that the hatch of gulls and pelicans and cormorants will be several days earlier than last year.

Several white-tailed deer wintered in the area and now frequently stay on the peninsula. The open winter was very favorable for the deer.

Coyotes are becoming less common in the vicinity according to the local residents. Red foxes are occasionally observed. Other fur bearing animals are at normal levels.

HALFWAY LAKE

The water levels have again raised beyond the desirable level which will prevent much needed marsh growth and possibly drown out some of the present marsh area. There is no definite outlet until it gets still several feet deeper.

No geese stopped on the refuge this spring but a good flight of scaups, pintails, mallards and blue-winged teals used the area. Several pair of shovellers, gadwalls and baldpates were on the area also which no doubt were establishing nests on the refuge.

Upland game birds are scarce. A few sharptailed grouse are frequently observed.

HOBART LAKE

This area did not get much above a normal run-off but the south fresh water unit rose to about one-half inch over spillway crest and the north unit rose six inches above last falls level. Fair rains will keep this area in good condition all summer. All structures were in good condition.

Numerous flocks of geese stopped on the area during migration. Diving ducks, such as scaups, redheads, canvasbacks were common during the spring migration. By the end of April there was a good number of blue-winged teals and besides, shovellers, pintails, mallards and gadwalls. It appears that the nesting population is down somewhat over last year. Food and cover conditions are excellent.

Rodents and other mammels are well under control with no particular species predominating.

LAKE GEORGE

This area being in the heavy snow belt this past winter received a heavy run-off and also increased the flow of several springs that fed the water areas. The main lake has now flooded the road that crosses between the two water units. The rock building is now standing in water a hundred feet or so from the present shoreline. The area used by the hunters during the open duck season has decreased in size to about four-fifths of its size three years ago. It is apparent that the rise will continue all summer unless a dry summer occurs.

The south fresh water unit is in good condition. The run-off nearly topped the low dam but there was no damage apparent.

Numerous flocks of geese used the smaller units on the refuge before the ice broke up during the spring. The nesting population of ducks appearred to be down for no apparent reason; the only species that showed an increase were the gadwalls.

Shorebirds observed while checking the area were willets, avocets, godwits, killdeer and jack snipes.

Upland game birds consist mainly of sharptailed grouse; a few pinnated grouse, Hungarian partridges and Chinese pheasants are occasionally observed. Nest and food conditions are very good.

The white-tailed deer are on the increase but very few farmers locally have mentioned observing any damage to agriculture. Many of the deer that normally stay in this area moved out when the snow became so deep that food was hard to find according to some of the local farmers.

STONEY SLOUGH

All units received an above normal supply of water due to the heavy snowfall during the winter months. The control gate was opened up to the capacity of the township culverts down below the gate since a heavy run-off was apparent. The water still rose sufficiently high to be diverted into units 2, 3, 4 and 5. No water ran across the auxiliary spillway. During the run-off the Arrowwood Refuge Manager met with the township officers at the gate and discussed water problems. They agreed to get larger culverts put in this summer; with out the Service water control unit their roads would have washed out.

The migration of ducks was barely noticeable except for the lesser scaups and blue-winged teals. The nesting population also is down about 10 tp 20%.

Food and cover conditions are very good on this area; parts are grazing units about the impoundments but cover is close by along fence lines and in waste pieces of land.

Upland game birds are low in number. Few Hungarian partridges and pheasants are nesting on the area. Several sharptailed grouse visit the area.

Local farmers are keeping predatory animals and other fur bearers under control. There has been no noticeable change in any species.

TOMAHAWK LAKE

This refuge was in the outside edge of the heavy snowfall belt so that the run-off was not so severe. Several inches ran across the spillway for a short time so that the water area was freshened. The dam is in good condition but a leak developed again in the spillway which will have to be repaired this summer.

When inspected the nesting population appearred to be down. The species noted were pintails, mallards, lesser scaup, baldpates, gadwalls, blue-winged teals and canvas-backs. Nesting conditions are very good for surface feeding ducks. No geese stopped on the water areas but several small flocks of Canada geese fed in the grain fields.

The pheasant population is still low; Hungarian partridges are on the increase but still not common. Food and cover conditions are excellent.

Predatory animals and fur bearers are about normal or slightly below on some species. No further control is advisable except what the local owner does during the open season on a refuge entrance permit.

Photographs: Attached

Prepared: May 16, 1952

Nelius B. Nelson

Nelius B. Nelson, Refuge Manager

Acting Regional Director

MAY 2 1 1952

WATERFOWL

REFUGE NO. DAK. EASEMENT REFUGES DIST. NO. 6 MONTHS OF JANUARY to APRIL 30, 1952

TOTAL ESTIMATE FOR PERIOD

(1) Species	(2) First Migrants Seen		(3) Peak Concentration		(4) Last Migrants Seen		(5) Young Produced		(6) Total
Common Name	BONEHILL CREEK Number	CHASE LAKE Date	HALFWAY LAKE Number	HUBART LAKE Date	LAKE GEORGE Number	STONEY SLOUGH Date	Broods Seen TOMAHAWK LAKE	Estimated Total	Estimated for Period
1. Swans:									
Whistling swan	0	20	0	40	50	0	0		
2. Geese:									
Canada goose	0	500	0	2,000	600	200	0		
Cackling goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Brant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
White-fronted goose	0	10	0	30	0	10	0		
Snow goose	0	50	0	900	700	500	0		
Blue goose	0	50	0	1,100	900	800			
3. Ducks:							140		
Mallard	400	1,700	180	1,500	1,200	390	0		
Black Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	40		
Gadwall	20	60	20	100	80	50	40		
Baldpate	60	250	40	300	200	90	275		
Pintail	300	1,500	210	800	1,000	350	0		
Green-winged teal	0	0	0	0	0	0	80		
Blue-winged teal	100	600	80	1,500	80	120	0		
Cinnamon teal	0	0	0	0	0	0	20		
Shoveller	20	20	20	120	20	20	0		
Wood duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Redhead	0	175	20	30	50	0	0		
Ring-necked duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	20		
Canvas-back	30	350	30	80	60	10	90		
Scaup	20	1,000	80	3,000	1,200	400	12		
Golden-eye	5	10	0	10	0	0	8		
Buffle-head	2	6	0	8	4	2	0		
Ruddy duck	0	0	0	0	0	0			
			20	200	90	30	20		
4. Coot:	18	80							

Form NR-1

3-1750
(June 1949)

(over)

SUMMARIES

Total Production:

Geese 0

Ducks 0

Coots 0

Total waterfowl usage during period 29,725

Peak waterfowl numbers

Areas used by concentrations

Principal nesting areas this season

Reported by
Nelius B. Nelson, Refuge Manager

INSTRUCTIONS

(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) First Seen: The first refuge record for the species during the season concerned in the reporting period, and the number seen. This column does not apply to resident species.

(3) Peak Concentration: The greatest number of the species present in a limited interval of time.

(4) Last Seen: The last refuge record for the species during the season concerned in the reporting period.

(5) Young Produced: 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.

(6) Total: Estimated total number of the species using the refuge during the period. This figure may or may not be more than that used for peak concentrations, depending upon the nature of the migrational movement.

Note: Only columns applicable to the reporting period should be used. It is desirable that the Summaries receive careful attention since these data are necessarily based on an analysis of the rest of the form.

61365

Bonehill Creek Refuge: April 12, 1952 - Close-up of lower washout caused by an unusal heavy run-off.
R119-1

Bonehill Creek Refuge: April 12, 1952 - Shows both washouts.
R119-2

Bonehill Creek Refuge: April 12, 1952 - Close-up of upper washout.
R119-3

Stoney Slough Refuge: April 7, 1952 - Water level in Unit No. 1. Part of run-off being diverted to the other units by keeping the gate partially closed.
R119-6

Stoney Slough Refuge: April 7, 1952 - Ditch which carries water from Unit 1 to the other three units. Heavy vegetation in recent years is slowing up the flow.
R120-1

Stoney Slough Refuge: April 7, 1952 - Shows water level on left side of township road which has only two 36 inch culverts; they do not handle the water that the refuge control gate will release at times during heavy run-offs.
R120-2

Hobart Lake Refuge: April 7, 1952 - Inspecting spillway during the spring run-off.
R120-3

Lake George Refuge: May 2, 1952 - South end of Lake George; water level so high now that the road is impassable; continuing to rise.
R121-2

Lake George Refuge: May 2, 1952 - Flow from south shallow unit into the main lake.
R121-3