

NORTH DAKOTA EASEMENT NO. 6

Narrative Reports

January-December 1950

(Long Lake Easement)

ROUTING SLIP

BRANCH OF WILDLIFE REFUGES

DATE: 195

MR. SALYER _____

MR. KRUMHES _____

MR. DUMONT _____

MISS BAUM _____

SECTION OF HABITAT IMPROVEMENT:

~~MR. GRIFFITH~~ REG

~~DR. BOURN~~ 10810

SECTION OF OPERATIONS:

MR. BALL _____

MR. REGAN _____

DR. MORLEY _____

SECTION OF LAND MANAGEMENT:

MR. ACKERKNECHT _____

STENOGRAPHERS:

NARRATIVE REPORT

REFUGE: NORTH DAKOTA EASEMENT - DISTRICT No 6

PERIOD: SEPT - DEC., 1950

NORTH DAKOTA EASEMENT REFUGES - DISTRICT NO. 6

BONE HILL CREEK

CHASE LAKE

HALF WAY LAKE

HOBART LAKE

LAKE GEORGE

STONEY SLOUGH

TOMAHAWK LAKE

The water conditions on all of the easement refuges were somewhat improved over a year ago due to the heavy runoff in the spring plus fair rains throughout the summer and cool temperatures. The areas were attractive to waterfowl but fewer used some of the areas probably due to the unusual improved water conditions throughout this district.

The fall migration of waterfowl was very gradual and thus no large noticeable concentrations occurred. Fewer ducks were shot per hunter as there appeared to be less field feeding. As a whole more geese were shot especially snow and blue geese since they were more common than in the past during the fall.

There were no reports of waterfowl doing damage to grain fields about the easement refuges. No doubt some depredation occurred since during September there were many rainy and poor drying days.

BONE HILL CREEK

The water level in the slough in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ below the farm yard has a good supply of water. The water level back of the dam had dropped to 30 inches below spillway crest by freeze-up. Since most of the water areas lie in grazing areas, the cover is very poor. Bulrushes are common in the shallow water areas but livestock keep it down. Beds of sago pondweed and milfoils are common in both the area back of the dam and in the slough to the southwest.

Ducks using the refuge found aquatics and waste grain in the area to feed on. Most of the mallards and pintails fed on the outside of the refuge area during the fall migration.

Upland game birds showed very little change over last year. Pheasants may have increased slightly. Food and cover is abundant on the refuge for upland game birds.

About the refuge there are few predatory animals since two farmers live on the refuge.

Water control structures were in a good condition at the time of the freeze up.

CHASE LAKE

This area froze over with the highest water level in many years. The cool weather during the summer caused very little evaporation so that the water remained high in the main lake as well as in the fresh water unit. More ducks and geese used the area during the fall migration despite the abundance of water in this area. There was sufficient cover for all waterfowl nesting in the area as there are very few cattle or horses being turned loose to drift for themselves in the fall as there have been up until the last seven years. Sago pondweed, coontail, milfoils and clasping leaf pondweeds were common in the fresh water unit.

There has been no change in the upland game birds on the refuge. Food and cover conditions are very good.

During the period November 10th to the 13th there was an open deer season in this area but not on the refuge. The refuge area is very small and only a few stay on the peninsula. It has been reported that numerous bucks were shot in this area.

Predatory and fur animals are scarce on the refuge since there is very little land outside of the water area. Only a few muskrats use the fresh water unit.

HALF WAY LAKE

The water levels continued at a level higher than desirable for good aquatic and marsh growth. There were very few rushes that recovered after the pond became deeper last spring. Aquatic plants such as sago pondweed was common besides numerous beds of coontail and milfoil.

Waterfowl made good use of the water area during migration. Coots were numerous.

There was no apparent change in the upland game population which consist of pheasants, sharptailed grouse, and Hungarian partridges.

Predatory animals are well under control by local farmers.

White tailed deer frequently come in on the refuge throughout the year. This section of the state is very hilly or rolly and much is utilized by local farmers.

HOBART LAKE

The north alkali water unit had the highest water level during the fall that it has had in many years. It dropped only four inches over the high during the spring which was eight inches below the upper spillway crest on the fresh water unit. The fresh water unit also froze up with a good supply of water.

Pondweeds such as sago pondweed, water milfoil and coontail were common. The marsh area in the alkali unit had a good stand of prairie bulrushes and produced a good seed crop even though the growing season was short.

The fall migration of ducks and geese made up for the low nesting population. The numerous sloughs created by the heavy spring runoff dried up during the late summer and thus the ducks concentrated on the larger areas such as Hobart Lake.

There was no change in the upland game birds. A few pheasants and grouse were occasionally noted in on the refuge. Food and cover was abundant.

Several hunting violation cases were picked up by the local district warden and his assistants for hunting migratory waterfowl on the federal refuge. A U.S. Game Agent was stationed in this area for a while to assist the State wardens with the patrol of the area. The goose hunting pressure was heavy about this area since numerous Canada geese together with a greater number of snow and blue geese stayed on the refuge.

LAKE GEORGE

The north water area or Salt Lake as it is known in the community held its high water level of the summer. When the roads began to dry up across sloughs, etc. people began coming in for swimming and picnics and many merely to see the new water level on the lake. The lake being unusually deep is an attractive deep blue color on sunny days; local residents say that a ball of binder twine won't reach the bottom. Vegetation is scarce in and about this water area due to the salts present.

The south units had a good supply of water. There was a flow of water over the spillway on the upper fresh water units continually. Pondweeds were common and the ducks made good use of it.

This area received close attention during the fall hunting season by the refuge personnel from the Arrowwood Refuge, the Research Division and the PR boys in the state. The heavy kill of redheads a year ago had been considered a serious threat to the population, however, this fall few redheads were shot on the pass between the two main units. The PR had planned a large scale redhead banding program but wound up with none banded. The redhead population on the refuge was small in comparison with last year and thus as in the past only occasionally are there heavy kills of redheads.

A few pheasants were noted on the south end of the refuge and sharptailed grouse are common. Food and cover conditions were excellent.

During the fall a few deer were noted. Tracks were numerous about the fresh water unit which is spring fed.

STONEY SLOUGH

The low duck population during the nesting season became somewhat improved when the fall migration started - numerous blue-winged teal and pintails moved in during the latter part of August and continued using the area until the middle of October. Mallards were using the area considerable in October; most of them fed outside of the refuge so that hunters were continually trying to get them coming back into the refuge in the morning. Few were shot. There was an increase in the number of snow and blue geese using the refuge as a resting place. Canada geese and a few white fronts made good use of the refuge. There were many hunters out after the geese when they would leave for field feeding outside of the refuge, but there were not many shot. The geese would leave the refuge in the morning about sunrise to an hour after and begin returning between 9 and noon; again a few would leave in the afternoon about 3 o'clock and return at sunset or later. Frequently, all the geese would feed on the green summer fallow or early fall plowing and not leave the refuge at all.

The pheasant population did not change any; a few were noted occasionally. Food and cover conditions were excellent.

The predators are well under control. Refuge entrance permits were issued to several land owners to trap muskrats, mink, etc.

TOMAHAWK LAKE

By freeze-up the water level on this area had dropped to fifteen inches below spillway crest still leaving a good water supply. Throughout the period the water remained relatively fresh. Sago pondweed was common together with a few beds of water milfoil and coontail. Diving ducks like to use this area - canvas-backs were numerous for the size of the area.

The cover about the refuge improved. Grazing was light over most of the area. Marsh growth is limited to the upper end of the west inlet creek and consists of round-stem bulrushes, burreed and prairie bulrushes.

Even though the nesting population of ducks was less during the summer, the fall migration of ducks made good use of the area. A few Canada geese stayed on the lake occasionally.

Upland game birds were scarce, only occasionally a few pheasants and Hungarian partridges have been noted on the refuge despite the good food and cover conditions.

Photograph: Attached

Prepared 1-16-51

Nelson B. Nelson
Refuge Manager

Approved January 17, 1951

Harry J. ...
Acting Regional Director



Stoney Slough Refuge - 10-19-50 - Snow and blue geese with a few Canada geese resting on the shores of Stoney Slough Refuge.
R104-4

Refuge

ESTIMATED FOR THE PERIOD

(1) Species Common Name	(2) First Migrants Seen		(3) Peak Concentration		(4) Last Migrants Seen		(5) Young Produced		(6) Total
	BONEHILL CREEK Number	CHASE LAKE Date	HALFWAY LAKE Number	HOBART LAKE Date	LAKE GEORGE Number	STONE SLAUGH	Broods Seen	Estimated Total	Estimated for Period
1. Swans:									
Whistling swan	0	10	0	60	40	0	0		
2. Geese:									
Canada goose	0	900	0	3,000	1,500	1,800	100		
Cackling goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Brant	0	0	0	0	50	0	0		
White-fronted goose	0	40	0	80	300	40	0		
Snow goose	0	200	0	900	200	500	0		
Blue goose	0	150	0	700		350	0		
3. Ducks:									
Mallard	700	15,000	2,600	15,000	7,000	8,000	1,900		
Black Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Gadwall	50	350	100	800	175	200	70		
Baldpate	20	500	110	900	350	175	120		
Pintail	400	2,200	1,300	3,500	4,000	6,000	1,600		
Green-winged teal	0	40	0	40	40	0	0		
Blue-winged teal	350	3,000	600	2,000	2,500	1,400	120		
Cinnamon teal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Shoveller	25	110	20	120	40	30	20		
Wood duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Redhead	10	600	15	300	300	40	50		
Ring-necked duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Canvas-back	25	800	40	500	550	60	90		
Scaup	90	900	80	700	1,100	350	150		
Golden-eye	0	30	0	45	0	10	0		
Buffle-head	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Ruddy duck	10	50	20	35	25	20	15		
4. Coot:	120	550	350	4,000	800	400	120		

3-1750

(June 1949)

(over)

Form NR-1

SUMMARIES

Total Production:

Geese _____

Ducks _____

Coots _____

Total waterfowl usage during period _____

Peak waterfowl numbers _____

Areas used by concentrations _____

Principal nesting areas this season _____

Reported by _____

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.

Central Office

This form is to be inserted in the original
folder of the Narrative Report for Easement No. 6,
Arrowwood Refuge.

Regional Office