

March - 1937

Waubay Migratory Waterfowl Refuge
Waubay, South Dakota
April 22, 1937

Chief, Bureau of Biological Survey
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Monthly biological report and report of other activities
from March 1, 1937 to March 31, 1937 on the Waubay Migratory Water-
fowl Refuge.

Weather:

Temperatures during March were normal. The highest temperature during the month, 49° F. occurred on March 6 and the lowest, -2° F. on March 23. The mean temperature for the month was 23.2° F. Seven inches of snow fell during the month with an average depth of twelve inches still on the ground on March 31. Thirteen days were clear and bright, eleven days were partly cloudy and only seven days were cloudy and dark. Practically all of the precipitation during March occurred on two days, March 23 and 24. This precipitation started as rain, soon turned to sleet and then to snow. The high winds drifted this snow, blocking all roads and caused much damage to wildlife.

Vegetation:

Moisture conditions during March were ideal for trees and shrubs. About fifteen inches of snow melted and due to the dryness of the subsoil, runoff was negligible. Normal precipitation during April will insure ample moisture for our trees and will materially raise the water levels of lakes and water table.

The receding snow revealed much damage to shrubs and vines by meadow mice and jackrabbits with the latter the most severe offender in wooded areas. In savana type vegetation, the rabbits done the most damage.

Waterfowl:

Forty mallards continued to remain on this refuge at the large spring at Spring Lake. This water does not freeze even during sub-zero weather and a few aquatic plants remain green and furnish food for waterfowl. Fresh water isopods are also numerous

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in this spring and no doubt furnish some food for ducks.

The first ducks from the south were observed on March 21. At that time seven pintail ducks were seen. Severe weather followed March 21 and checked further northward migration. On March 31, a few snow and blue geese were seen.

Raptors:

Great-horned owls were often observed and heard during the month. One nest was found but was not disturbed. Examination of pellets of the Great-horned owl indicates a diet of rabbits and mice with no trace of game birds being eaten.

Screech owls are common, being mostly of the grey color phase, however, one screech owl of the brown color phase was found dead in an upland game bird shelter.

Hawks were rarely seen during March. A few redtail and toward the end of the month, several male Marsh hawks and sparrow hawks were seen.

Other Birds:

Birds seen during March included meadow larks, red-wing blackbirds, downy woodpeckers, hairy woodpeckers, migrant shrikes, chickadees, red palls, horned larks, longspurs, English sparrows, one starling, slate-colored juncos and tree sparrows.

Upland Game Birds:

Prairie chicken were common during March but no sharp-tailed grouse were seen. European partridge were paired by March 31 and were always observed in pairs.

The severe storms and lack of food has worked extreme hardship on the pheasants during March. Considerable feeding of pheasants was done during March and we were able to bring through the month about 50% of the birds that entered the winter last fall. The losses can be directly traceable to starvation, at least this is the conclusion that can be drawn from examination of the stomach contents and weights of birds found dead. Without exception, birds found dead were very light in weight and their stomachs contained no food. In some instances, grass and gravel had been eaten and in two cases, coral berries had served as food. Choking and suffocation from drifting snow could not in one instance be definitely blamed for a pheasant loss.

Mammals:

Coyotes were often heard howling during evening in March but were seldom seen. Investigation during the past winter would indicate that the coyote does not do much, if any damage to upland game birds at least during the winter. Investigations during the nesting season might reveal a different story.

Flickertails (Richardson's ground squirrel) came out of hibernation during March and seem very numerous. It is entirely possible that some control measures should be taken with them. Thirteen lines ground squirrels were seen this month. One woodchuck was also located in the woods on this refuge, evidently Marmota monax. Very few of the people in this country have seen the woodchuck and it is evident that this specimen is on the outer edge of the species range.

The population of jackrabbit and cottontail is still fairly large in spite of the severe loss during the winter from cold and from predators. Coyotes and great horned owls fed to a great extent on rabbits during the past winter.

White footed mice, grasshopper mice and harvest mice are very common. Meadow mice did much damage to snow covered shrubs and vines.

Water Levels:

Water levels of all lakes on the Waubay Migratory Waterfowl Refuge have raised from eighteen inches to two feet. Big Waubay Lake has a maximum depth of three feet with eighteen inches average depth. This lake was dry last fall. Hillebrand lake has risen eighteen inches over the low of October 1936. The water in Dyke No. 1 on Spring Lake has risen forty eight inches and now has a maximum depth of six feet. Spring Lake Dyke No. 2 has about two feet of water and Spring Lake proper has risen eighteen inches over the low of last fall.

Refuge Improvement:

During March the rip-rap was completed on Spring Lake Dyke No. 2. The control culvert and gate was installed in this dyke and also on this dyke the concrete head walls laid. A dirt fill, 300 feet long was made between Dyke No. 1 and Dyke No. 2. This fill will be later rip-raped. This fill will permit considerable more water to be kept in Dyke No. 2.

Two large islands were completed and rip-raped in Spring lake. Considerable difficulty was encountered in building on of these islands because of washing away of material under the ice.

April 22, 1937

A gravel floor was laid in the machine shed under construction here and remodeling of the refuge office is about twenty five percent completed. The carpenters have made two rustic picnic tables and have eight others under construction. These tables are made from native bur oad lumber, cut and finished on this refuge. Only trees that have died from the drought are used to make these tables. The carpenters also made one telephone cabinet and a pair of hand carved candle sticks for the residence cabin. Seven picture frames were also made for pictures painted by a WPA artist. The roof of the machine shed was painted and the construction, hanging and painting of four large sliding doors for the building was accomplished.

Nearly one mile of our fire and service trails was graveled and six miles of refuge roads were three times cleared of snow to permit travel.

Respectfully yours,

Watson E. Beed
Junior Refuge Manager

WEB:lh

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY
Division of Migratory Waterfowl

WEEKLY ITINERARY AND REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

Watson E. Buss (Name)

Hephey, South Dakota

Period from 3/1/37 to 3/5/37
Day, Month, & Year

Haubay Migratory Refuge

DATE	Outline of Work Performed
Sun.	
Date	
Mon.	Warm 20° F. Bright-no wind. Made study skin of grasshopper mouse found dead yesterday. Office work--correspondence--reports. Investigated upland game birds. Supervision of WPA works.
3/2/37	Date
Tues.	Warm 30° F. Bright-no wind. Much thawing today, roads muddy. Office work, reports. To Webster on refuge accounts and to contact Ury Dahling, State Game Warden and Wesley Kading, County Engineer.
3/3/37	Date
Wed.	Warm 28° F. Dark-no wind. Office work--correspondence--refuge plans. Investigated upland game. Many sharp-tailed grouse--the grouse are now feeding at the bird shelters.
3/4/37	Date
Thurs.	30° F. Bright-little wind. Office work--correspondence--refuge plans. Snow is melting fast. Water levels in the lakes are raising fast. To Haubay on compensation papers for injured WPA worker.
3/5/37	Date
Fri.	Warm 34° F. Bright-no wind. Refuge Plans--reports. Supervised carpenters and other WPA workers. Patrolled refuge. Pheasant loss on this refuge will exceed 50%. European partridge endure adverse weather and food conditions well and seem in fine condition.
3/5/37	Date
Sat.	Warm 50° F. Bright-no wind. Inspected all WPA works and patrolled entire refuge. With Jack Rommel to try to decide on size of goose pasture. Much of snow melting, ground thawing and much mud. Lake levels raising sharply. 6 foot of water in Spring Lake dyke no. 1. About 18" in dyke No. 2. Spring Lake proper is also raising greatly.
3/5/37	Date

REMARKS:

(Field Official in Charge)

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TIME DISTRIBUTION

-- Activities --													
Day	Adminis- tration	Law Enforce- ment	General Mainten- ance	Prepara- tion of Plans	Re- search and Investi- gation	Public Contacts and Rela- tions	Land Acquisi- tion and Trespass	General Office Work Public Works (ECW, etc.)	Preda- tory Animal Control	Miscel- aneous	Off Duty		
Week of & Yr.	Supervi- sion	Patrol	Repair										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Sun.													
Mon.	3-1-37												
Tues.													
Wed.													
Thurs.													
Fri.													
Sat.	3-6-37												
Total	6 days	9		5	6	15	6		10			1	2

(Form to be completely filled in each week using ink or typewriter and approved by immediate superior in space provided).

Col. 1 - Fill in date each day.

- " 2 - Show hours spent in general administration and supervision, both field and office; instructions to field personnel.
- " 3 - Show hours spent on enforcement, patrol, and court attendance.
- " 4 - Show hours spent in general refuge maintenance and repair, including buildings and equipment; fire suppression.
- " 5 - Show hours spent on project plans; management plans; development plans.
- " 6 - Show hours spent on research work and investigation; bird counts, nesting, etc.
- " 7 - Show hours spent in public contact; lectures, talks, demonstrations, conferences, school, press, etc.
- " 8 - Show hours spent on lands, including permits, trespass, sale of products, etc.
- " 9 - Show hours spent in office routine, reports, correspondence, etc.
- " 10 - Show hours spent on CCC and other public works supervision.
- " 11 - Show hours spent in predatory animal control.
- " 12 - Show hours spent on activities not otherwise listed. Outline in detail on reverse side of form.
- " 13 - Show hours off duty, including holidays, sick leave, and annual leave.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY
Division of Migratory Waterfowl

WEEKLY ITINERARY AND REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

Watson E. Read

(Name)

Waubay, South Dakota

(Address)

Period from 3/7/37 to 3/13/37
(Day, Month, & Year)

Waubay Mig. Waterfowl Refuge
(Name of Refuge)

DATE	Outline of Work Performed
Sun.	Warm 38° F. Blustery-such wind. Patrolled entire refuge and had fifteen head of cattle removed from the refuge. These cattle had been driven on the refuge but the owner promised to see that they were kept off the refuge in the future. Conference with Ury Dahling, State Game Warden and with Mr. Orris Long WPA foreman. To Waubay for conference with Mr. Chester, Project Supervisor of the WPA.
<u>3/7/37</u> Date	
Mon.	Cold 8° F. Stormy-windy-some snow. Refuge plans. Conference on WPA works with foreman and Mr. Chester, project Supervisor. Prepared maps on proposed land purchases for this refuge. Started preparation of seeding and tree planting program for this refuge. Collected grass-hopper mouse.
<u>3/8/37</u> Date	
Tues.	Cold 0° F. Bright-no wind. Office work, correspondence and reports. To Waubay and Webster on compensation forms and refuge accounts.
<u>3/9/37</u> Date	
Wed.	Cool 10° F. Bright-no wind. Office work, reports. Left refuge at 11:00 AM on authorized trip to Pierre to attend game and fish conference and school. Arrived at Sand Lake Refuge at 3:00 PM, left Sand Lake Refuge at 5:45, arrived at Pierre at 11:45.
<u>3/10/37</u> Date	
Thurs.	Warm 20° F. Bright-no wind. Attended all meetings of conference. Interesting and instructive talks, especially that of Philip A. Dumont, Mgr. of Sand Lake Refuge. Interesting lecture by Richard H. Pough, Nat. Assoc. Audubon Societies on Biological food chains.
<u>3/11/37</u> Date	
Fri.	Warm 20° F. Bright-little wind. Attended all meetings of Game Conference. Instructive lecture and discussion of "evidence" and preparation of court cases, conduct in making arrests by Robert D. Jones, Atty. of Milbank, S. Dak. Elucidation of new game laws, search warrants, seizure, court procedure, confiscation by B. D. Mintener, Supt. St. Dept. of Justice.
<u>3/12/37</u> Date	
Sat.	Cool 10° F. Bright-some wind. Conference with Mr. Dumont Mgr. Sand Lake Refuge on vouchering and other refuge procedure. Left Sand Lake Refuge 10:00 AM, arrived at Waubay Refuge 1:00 PM.
<u>3/13/37</u> Date	
REMARKS:	

(Field Official in Charge)

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TIME DISTRIBUTION

-- Activities --														
Day of Week	Day, Mo., & Yr.	Adminis- tration and Supervi- sion	Law Enforce- ment and Patrol	General Mainten- ance and Repair	Prepara- tion of Refuge Plans	Re- search and Investi- gation	Public Contacts and Public Rela- tions	Land Acquisi- tion and Trespass	General Office Work and Public Works (ECW, etc.)	Supervi- sion	Preda- tory Animal Con- trol	Miscel- aneous	Off Duty	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Sun.	3-7-37	2	2				4	4						
Mon.		2				2				1				
Tues.		1			5		2	2		2				
Wed.										1				
Thurs.												8		
Fri.												8		
Sat.	3-13-37	1										4	2	
Total	7 days	4	2		5	2	6	6		6		20	2	

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- " 2 - Show hours spent in general administration and supervision, both field and office; instructions to field personnel.
- " 3 - Show hours spent on enforcement, patrol, and court attendance.
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY
Division of Migratory Waterfowl

WEEKLY ITINERARY AND REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

Watson E. Beed

(Name)

Waubay, South Dakota

(Address)

Period from 3/14/37 to 3/20/37
(Day, Month, & Year)

Waubay Mig. Waterfowl Refuge
(Name of Refuge)

DATE	Outline of Work Performed
Sun.	: Cool 10° F. Bright-no wind. Dinner at Jack Rommel's home. Mr. Philip A. Dullont, Mgr. Sand Lake Refuge present. Examined Canada geese to be given by Mr. Rommel to this refuge. Conference with Mr. Dullont on bird banding and other refuge activities.
<u>3/14/37</u> Date	
Mon.	: Cool 5° F. Bright-no wind. Office work and refuge plans--planting program completed and forwarded to John E. Hall's office. Conference with Mr. Long, WPA foreman.
<u>3/15/37</u> Date	
Tues.	: Cool 20° F. Dark-high wind. Office work and reports on WPA materials needed. Supervision of carpenters in making tables for picnic grounds and bird traps for banding birds. These traps are the most box type.
<u>3/16/37</u> Date	
Wed.	: Warm 30° F. Some rain and snow-dark-no wind. Office work--correspondence. Spent the day with Mr. Lange, landscape architect on refuge plans--bridge-recreational area-buildings-plantings-directional signs for refuge roads, etc.
<u>3/17/37</u> Date	
Thurs.	: Warm 25° F. Dark-windy. Supervision of WPA project. Conference with Mr. Long, WPA foreman on progress of our project here. Office work correspondence, reports on materials needed to complete work outlined for the WPA project.
<u>3/18/37</u> Date	
Fri.	: Warm 30° F. Dark-windy. Office work and selections of men to lay off in the necessary reduction of our force. Biological report. Checked amount of grain on hand for spring feeding and contacted E. W. Tracy in regard to ownership of tract 26, a proposed addition to this refuge.
<u>3/19/37</u> Date	
Sat.	: Warm 26° F. Cloudy-some wind. Office work, correspondence. To Webster to WPA office to check on reduction of our force here. Laid off men in most cases who could immediately be assigned to other projects. Refuge accounts. To Waubay for conference with Mr. Long, WPA foreman.
<u>3/20/37</u> Date	

REMARKS:

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: (Field Official in Charge)
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		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Sun.	2/4-32					2		4						2
Mon.	3/5-37	2				4				2				
Tues.	3/6-37	3			1	1				3				
Wed.	3/7-37	1				6				3				
Thurs.	3/8-37	2			3	1				2				
Fri.	3/9-37	2			3	3			1	1				
Sat.	3/10-37	4								2	1			
Total	7 days	14			7	17		4	1	13	1			2

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY
Division of Migratory Waterfowl

WEEKLY ITINERARY AND REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

Watson E. Beed		Waubay, South Dakota	
(Name)		(Address)	
Period from <u>3/21/37</u> to <u>3/27/37</u>		<u>Waubay Migratory Waterfowl Refuge</u>	
(Day, Month, & Year)		(Name of Refuge)	
DATE	:	Outline of Work Performed	
Sun.	:	Warm-bright-no wind. Patrolled entire refuge. About 30 prairie chickens seen. Also saw 7 pintail ducks, first ducks seen on this refuge this spring except a few mallards which spent the winter here.	
<u>3/21/37</u>	:	Many tree sparrows.	
Date	:		
Mon.	:	Warm-bright-no wind. Office work, correspondence. Supervision of all WPA works with county engineer, Wesley Kading on possible road improvement on Waubay Refuge. To Waubay for materials and refuge accounts.	
<u>3/22/37</u>	:		
Date	:		
Tues.	:	Warm-dark-much wind. Left refuge at 6:45 AM to go to Aberdeen, S. Dak. in Government car, tag # USDA 44-594 to attend Tractor and Diesel engine school, sponsored by the Western Materials Co. of Aberdeen.	
<u>3/23/37</u>	:	Trip authorized by John H. Ball. Arrived Aberdeen 9:00 AM. Spent entire day attending meetings, lectures and moving pictures of above mentioned school. Blizzard during entire day.	
Date	:		
Wed.	:	Cool-blizzard-high wind. 15 inches of snow fell in past 24 hours. Much sleet and ice. Telephone and telegraph line down. Attended tractor school. Roads blocked prevented return from Aberdeen to Waubay Refuge. Necessary to spend night in Aberdeen.	
<u>3/24/37</u>	:		
Date	:		
Thurs.	:	Cold-some snow-windy. Left Aberdeen 9:00 AM, arrived at Webster 11:00 AM. Roads blocked between Webster and Refuge. Stored Govt. car in Webster and took train to Waubay. Roads blocked between Waubay and Refuge. Remained in Waubay over night.	
<u>3/25/37</u>	:		
Date	:		
Fri.	:	Warm-bright-no wind. Roads opened to Webster from Waubay by way of Grenville and Roslyn. Rode with Salesman from Waubay to Webster. Left Webster at 2:00 PM in Govt. car, arrived at Waubay Refuge at 4:30 PM. Conference with WPA foreman and Timekeeper	
<u>3/26/37</u>	:		
Date	:		
Sat.	:	Cool-some snow-dark. Office work, correspondence. Issued stop orders on twenty five WPA workers in a reduction of force. Reports.	
<u>3/27/37</u>	:		
Date	:		
REMARKS:	:		
	:		
	:	(Field Official in Charge)	
	:		

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		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Sun.	3-21-37			5										3
Mon.	3-22-37	2			3	4								
Tues.	3-23-37												8	
Wed.	3-24-37												8	
Thurs.	3-25-37												8	
Fri.	3-26-37	2											6	
Sat.	3-27-37	1			2	1				3				
Total	7 days	5		5	5	5				3			30	3

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY
Division of Migratory Waterfowl

WEEKLY ITINERARY AND REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

Watson E. Beed

(Name)

Waubay, South Dakota

(Address)

Period from 3/28/37 to 3/31/37
(Day, Month, & Year)

Waubay Migratory Waterfowl Refuge
(Name of Refuge)

DATE	Outline of Work Performed
Sun.	Warm-dark-some snow-no wind. Worked on mammal study skin.
3/28/37	
Date	
Mon.	Warm-dark-no wind. Office work, correspondence, refuge plans.
3/29/37	Patrolled portion of refuge and inspected WPA works.
Date	
Tues.	Warm-some snow-no wind. With Mr. Lampe, on arrangement of public recreational area and other proposed refuge plans and improvement. Interview with WPA men from Grenville sent here by county WPA office at Webster on rearrangement or substitution of Grenville men for Waubay men as no WPA project except that at the refuge is located near Grenville.
3/30/37	
Date	
Wed.	Warm-some snow-no wind. Conference with Orrie Long on works for new WPA shift to start April First. Telephone conversation with Mr. Regen on WPA payroll and materials and with WPA office at Webster. To Waubay for mail and materials for refuge. Correspondence and office work.
3/31/37	
Date	
Thurs.	
Date	
Fri.	
Date	
Sat.	
Date	

REMARKS:

(Field Official in Charge)

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		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Sun.	3-28-37						2							6
Mon.	3-29-37	2		2		3				3				
Tues.	3-30-37					5		2		1				
Wed.	3-31-37	2			2	1	1	1		3				
Thurs.														
Fri.														
Sat.														
Total	4 days	4		2	2	9	3	3		7				6

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