

IN REPLY REFER TO

REGION No. 9

Fort Niobrara

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY
OFFICE OF REGIONAL DIRECTOR

NORTH DAKOTA
SOUTH DAKOTA
NEBRASKA
KANSAS

406 Post Office Building
Omaha, Nebraska
November 21, 1939

Chief, Bureau of Biological Survey

Washington, D. C.

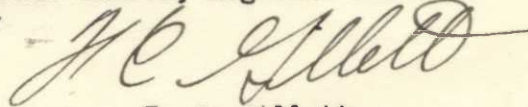
Dear Sir:

There is enclosed quarterly report for the period
ending October 31, 1939, for the Fort Niobrara Game
Preserve, Nebraska, submitted by Mr. Geno A. Amundson,
Refuge Manager.

*detached
for P. W.*
Grain report for the period August 1 - October 31
is attached to the narrative report.

Very truly yours,

Burnie Maurek, Regional Director
By



F. C. Gillett
Refuge Administrative Assistant

Enclosure



REGION NO. 1
NORTH DAKOTA
SOUTH DAKOTA
NEBRASKA
KANSAS

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY
OFFICE OF REGIONAL DIRECTOR

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Fort Niobrara

408 Post Office Building
Omaha, Nebraska
November 21, 1939

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Washington, D. C.

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Preserve, Nebraska, submitted by Mr. Gene A. Amundson,
Refuge Manager.
Grain report for the period August 1 - October 31
is attached to the narrative report.

Very truly yours,

Burnie Maurer, Regional Director
By *[Signature]*
F. C. Gillett
Refuge Administrative Assistant

Enclosure



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Fort Niobrara

UNITED STATES
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BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY
OFFICE OF REGIONAL DIRECTOR

REGION NO. 9

NORTH DAKOTA
SOUTH DAKOTA
NEBRASKA
KANSAS

406 Post Office Building
Omaha, Nebraska
November 21, 1939

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Washington, D. C.

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ending October 31, 1939, for the Fort Niobrara Game
Preserve, Nebraska, submitted by Mr. Gene A. Amundson,
Refuge Manager.

Grain report for the period August 1 - October 31
is attached to the narrative report.

Very truly yours,

Burnie Maurek, Regional Director
By

F. C. Gillett
Refuge Administrative Assistant

/ab

Enclosure



NORTH DAKOTA
SOUTH DAKOTA
NEBRASKA
KANSAS

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY
OFFICE OF REGIONAL DIRECTOR

IN REPLY REFER TO

Post Office

408 Post Office Building
Omaha, Nebraska
November 21, 1939

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

Dear Sir:

There is enclosed quarterly report for the period
ending October 31, 1939, for the Post Office Game
Preserve, Nebraska, submitted by Mr. Gene A. Anderson,
Refuge Manager.

Quota report for the period August 1 - October 31
is attached to the narrative report.

Very truly yours,

Burke Murck, Regional Director
By

P. C. Gillett
Refuge Administrative Assistant

ab

Enclosure



THE INTERIOR
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF **AGRICULTURE**
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY
FORT NIobrARA, GAME PRESERVE
VALENTINE, NEBRASKA

IN REPLY REFER TO

R-Fort Niobrara,
Reports, Quarterly.

October 31, 1939.

Chief, Biological Survey,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Quarterly report August 1st., 1939, to October 31st., 1939, on the Fort Niobrara Reservation, Wildlife and activities appurtenant thereto.

1. Report on Weather during the period:

1. Weather:- The weather was about normal for the past three months, warm spells were usually followed by moisture and cooler weather. On the 25th of September we had about $1\frac{1}{2}$ " of moisture most of it in the form of snow, snow started falling in the late afternoon after it had been raining all day, and by night everything was white. We did not get a frost following the moisture and no plant life was killed. We had another very heavy rain in the first part of October that settled the dust and moistened the soil in places for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ " deep.

2. Report of Wildlife observed during the period:

1. Buffalo:- There was nothing of interest that happened in the buffalo herd during the past quarter. There were no new calves, and there were no deaths during the period.

*animals
carded
true*

true

The buffalo herd wanted to get south of the river in the early part of September, so the gates between the two pastures were left open and they have been roaming back and forth from the big buffalo pasture north of the river to the smaller pasture south until recently, it was necessary to close the gates as some of the elk started crawling under the fence stretched across the river at the bridge.

The buffalo are in as good condition as can be expected for this time of the year. They are all gaining in flesh rapidly now that the rutting and fly season is over, and they are starting to grow their winter coats of hair.

2. Elk:- It was noted that a bull elk peeled his antlers on or about the 10th of August, this would indicate that he grew his new antlers in approximately $4\frac{1}{2}$ months from the time he shed his last year's antlers.

The first indications of rutting season was noted ~~when~~ ^{when} some of the bulls started bugling on or about the 12th or 13th of September, and on September 24th., I saw one bull and 13 cows bunched up on Little Beaver Creek.

All 8 of the elk that are to be disposed of this season have been requested, and we could have sold a number more animals. A pair of young elk are to be trucked to a rancher in northeastern New Mexico.

The elk are all apparently thrifty and are doing nicely. I noted two bulls lame in their shoulders from fighting.

3. Deer:- Nothing in particular has happened in our small bunch of white tailed deer. We have 2 fawns this season. There are 2 mature bucks, the oldest has a nice pair of antlers, the other 5 are does.

We still have a number of native mule deer in the pastures north and south of the river, on the Dineen place, on the west arm of the refuge, and on the river strip between the 2 buffalo pastures. It seems as soon as pheasant and duck season opens the mule deer increase on the refuge, as shooting bothers them.

4. Texas Longhorns:- I drove the longhorn cows and calves from the Stromberg pasture to the large pasture east of Headquarters and turned them in with the longhorn bull and steer about August 2nd. About August 17th., the calves were branded and the males altered and the herd was returned to the Stromberg place with the old bull. In the last part of August we trucked the longhorn heifers from the Christopher place to the Stromberg pasture.

On August 25th., I was able to drive the old longhorn steer on the scales at the slaughterhouse and learned that he weighed 1400 pounds. He was taken to the Cherry County Fair at Valentine in the first week of September, and he was the most popular and sought after exhibit they had.

Survey
note -
new

5. Predatory, Fur bearing, and Rodent Mammals:- We seem to have a surplus of predatory and fur bearing animals on the refuge, one can see coyote signs and tracks almost anyplace on the refuge, and they have come within a few rods of the Headquarters area. Bobcat tracks are all along the timber areas and on August

10th., a large one was noted crossing our large refuge bridge.

The beavers are becoming very numerous and one can see skunks almost anyplace on the refuge about sundown.

I shot a three-fourths grown coyote by car light on August 11th., in the north buffalo pasture. Earl Ladd, who visited here this fall, trapped 3 coyotes on the west arm and we have the scalps of 2 of them. Mr. Ladd formerly worked on this refuge and is now at the Elk Refuge in Wyoming.

The beavers have caused considerable trouble during the summer, they have plugged overflow pipes at dams, ^{dam}dammed up spillways, they have cut hundreds of valuable trees, including our different hardwoods, pine and cedar, and of course cottonwood and willow. At one place on Crooked Creek I counted 9 large cottonwood trees felled by beaver, and they had started to cut several more. They have cut trees causing them to fall on our big game fences damaging the fence.

It is hoped that we will have the surplus numbers of coyotes, bobcats, skunks, raccoon and beavers removed this coming season. *Beaver should be live-trapped for restocking. E.H.S.*

6. Reptile Life & Insects:- A total of 24 rattle snakes were killed at the den near the lookout tower in the north pasture, and it was noted that only 2 of them were small snakes born this year, the majority of them were large mature snakes, and the remainder of medium size. One of the small rattlesnakes, who

was probably 11" in length had a full grown white footed mouse in its stomach, this seemed to be a rather large bite for a small snake.

We were not bothered with any insects during the past 3 months, as the grasshopper season was mostly passed by last July.

7. Birds:- On August 3rd., we noticed large flocks of cliff swallows migrating south. On August 13th., the first blue wing teal were noted on the refuge ponds. On August 22nd., we saw a large number of migrating shrikes and on that same day I saw a shrike attempting to get some small young robins out of a nest and about that time the old male robin saw the shrike he drove it out of the Headquarters area. I saw a shrike attempting to get some English sparrows out of a live trap, and when it found this was not possible, it started after a live sparrow that was setting on a shed roof.

We have a pair of robins that have been nesting at the Headquarters house for a number of years, and on August 22nd., I noticed they were busy feeding their third brood of young for this summer, and in the first part of September they were still busy carrying food for their spotted young waiting around on the lawn.

One old grouse with 13 young nearly three-fourths

grown moved up from the pond pasture east of Headquarters and made themselves at home at the Assistant's quarters. They used the bird bath, they would fly up and roost on the ^{tree} closeline, they dusted their feathers under the shrubs, dug dandelions out of the lawn and got in trouble when they started eating flowers. They stayed around until the first part of October.

Survey
note -
nhw

On August 28th., I checked the speed of a flock of female Lark buntings, I followed them for over half a mile and they flew at a steady rate of 26 miles per hour, it was a quiet still day.

6 beautiful male wood ducks stopped at one of the ponds on the west arm of the refuge, these are the first ducks of that species I have noted at this refuge. A large loon spent a couple of days on a pond east of the house, and we saw a cormorant one one of the ponds, for the first time on this refuge.

Survey
note
nhw

We have quite a number of pheasants on the refuge and the number seems to be about the same, unless the heavy growth of weeds and grass conceals them. We only heard one quail this summer, and were unable to see any of them.

The grouse and prairie chickens are still on the increase, I have seen flocks from 32 to 49, and one sees them not only on the refuge but in any part of this country.

3. Other Activities:

1. Grazing, Food & Cover Plantings:- There has been a very good growth of grasses during the past season, and it is

hoped that we will continue to get good seasons to improve grazing conditions.

Ranchers living adjacent to the refuge harvested approximately 1,219.27 tons of hay on the refuge this year, not all the returns are in to date, and I would like to have had more hay cut to reduce the heavy accumulation of old mat in places that make a fire hazard.

We had approximately 131 tons of hay cut for refuge use, this was cut on a share basis.

Mr. Griffith from the Washington Office of ~~Food~~ ~~Habits Research~~ spent a part of October 16th., here and assisted us to start planting a shipment of wild celery seed pods. These pods were planted in 2 ponds.

*Recommend
small
plantings
in all ponds
where there
was suitable
bottom
RCS*

2. Protection:- The refuge has been patrolled from time to time by the personnel. Fire tool boxes were checked for water supply. We had our roadside and fireguards mowed by hay harvesters this season under Special Use Permits.

3. Improvements & Maintenance:- The first part of August we changed all our gate padlocks and installed new locks of a different type and key. The old locks were sent to the Upper Souris Refuge.

A bronz,plaque was placed on the marker at the Christopher place. This marker was constructed under the CCC program and the Cherry County Commissioners purchases the plaque. This sight markes the first voting place in Cherry County.

2 loads of property and equipment was hauled to the Sand Lake Refuge and on the return trips a load of refuge signs and oats were hauled.

After having the office in the Headquarters house for 9 years we moved it into the east room of the Museum.

We installed a double gate on the east side of the big antelope pasture for one of the hay harvesters who harvested 988 tons and removes his hay 1 stack at a time.

4. Public Relations:- During the month of October Mr. Jack Mendenhall, Superintendent of the Valentine Fish Hatchery removed between 90 and 100,000 small bass, crappies and bluegills from some of the refuge ponds. This large number of fish was a very valuable gift to the State and it has enabled us to remove the water from some of the ponds where we piled the growth of pond weeds and replanted with wild celery seed.

On October 27th., a party from the Soil Conservation Regional office was here and made some moving pictures of the buffalo herd and of the heavy growth of vegetation on the southwest portion of the refuge.

*moving
Coontail
and chaga
Requested
immediate
reflood ponds
instead of
leaving them
dry over winter
as he had
planned
ECG*

5. Miscellaneous Activities:- The first part of August we worked up a new WPA project, and to date we have been unable to get it started, however, I received some encouraging information recently.

We had to rebuild 14 rods of woven wire stock fence on the highway at the top of the hill northwest of Headquarters

where an elderly man lost control of his car and broke through the fence in 2 places, fortunately he was not injured seriously.

On August 28th., we had a very severe electric storm and a stack of hay was burned out south, this stack belonged to one of the harvesters.

On September 27th., I made a trip to Gregory, South Dakota, to make an investigation for the Regional Office of a Candidate for Foreman at the LaCreek CCC camp.

I have been able to relocate the present location of all of the Army camp property that was left here and has been transferred to other refuges and then transferred several times since.

On October 7th., Tony Engelbert, South Dakota Game Warden, from Winner paid the refuge a visit and was here several hours.

Mr. Francis Gillett from the Regional Office visited the refuge on September 15th., and 16th. Mr. Ralph Imler from the Denver office stopped a few minutes the morning Mr. Gillett arrived.

There will be no pictures accompanying this report as there has been no new projects completed, and quite a number of pictures were sent in July 1st., with the annual report.

Very truly yours,

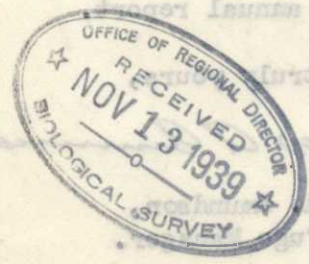


Geno A. Amundson,
Refuge Manager.

CC: Regional office.

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CC: Regional office.