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Sacramento Wildlife Development Project

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FINAL REPORT

As Required By

Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act

TITLE OF PROJECT: Sacramento Wildlife Development Project

LOCATION: SE $\frac{1}{4}$ 21; S $\frac{1}{2}$ 22; all of 27, 28; NE $\frac{1}{4}$ & E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ 29; N $\frac{1}{2}$
33-5-17. 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles west of Wilcox, Nebraska

SUPERVISORS: Melvin O. Steen, Director

Willard R. Barbee, Chief, Land Management Division

C. Phillip Agee, Federal Aid Coordinator

PROJECT LEADER: Richard J. Spady, Resident Area Manager

Report for the period:

July 1, 1959 to June 30, 1960

GENERAL STATEMENT

During the past year, the project has been in a period of transition from a developmental phase to management and maintenance phases. At this time, most of the major developmental work has been completed, with mainly corrective or finish work remaining. Major developmental work yet to be done includes the laying of buried pipe from the wells to the lake bottom; and the design, construction and installation of suitable hunting blinds for the area. When the aforementioned work is completed the project will settle almost entirely into maintenance and management activities.

WORK ACCOMPLISHED⁽¹⁾

1. Buildings.

b. Maintenance:

General maintenance of buildings built under Project W-23-D-8 was carried on throughout the year. All doors and windows of the administration building were repainted, asphalt shingles on the roof of the residence were stapled down to prevent wind damage, pump houses were painted and many other minor repair jobs were accomplished. General upkeep such as sweeping, mopping, etc., was also carried out.

5. Roads.

b. Maintenance:

Roads were maintained throughout the year. They were graded three times during the year and bladed or dragged every two weeks. Considerable time was also spent during the winter months clearing snow.

8. Public Use Facilities.

b. Maintenance:

Parking lots were sprayed and mowed several times during the summer and fall. The lot adjacent to the headquarters building was kept clear of snow during the winter.

c. Management:

Twenty blindsites were located at intervals of 400 yards, and mounds were constructed with a 6:1 slope and an 8' x 12' level top. Borrow

¹Activities listed under this section are enumerated according to the outline used in the P.S.&E., so that like items of the two documents can be readily reconciled.

pits were developed in the process. It is believed that the mounds will provide a good location for blinds in the fall and good nesting or loafing areas in the spring. Borrow pits will insure a water area even in relatively dry periods. Five pits were excavated in dikes as locations for blinds, and three spots are available for construction of platform-type blinds.

Although plans included construction of 25 hunting blinds, it was later deemed inadvisable to proceed on such a scale until various types had been tested. During the 1959 waterfowl season, five lightweight panel blinds were erected and camouflaged on mound sites. It was found that they were not satisfactory due to wind damage and the tendency to protrude too high above the ground level. Eight blinds of this type are available for use at the present time. It is thought that tank-type blinds installed flush with the ground would be more desirable and designing is underway at the present time.

11. Signs and Boundary Markers.

c. Management:

A permanent refuge boundary was laid out and 20 refuge signs and 20 public hunting signs were erected along the boundaries at intervals of 600 feet. Old signs were removed. The boundary as posted results in 768 acres of refuge and 1,545 acres of public hunting area.

12. Planting Trees, Shrubs or Aquatic Plants.

a. Development:

Plans to plant 30,000 multiflora rose along the access road and around parking lots were halted due to the apparent infestation of all mature roses on the area with an unknown disease. The rapid mortality resulting therefrom has made it inadvisable to make any extensive plantings of roses. Also, upon further consideration, it was decided that planting of a shrub row of any type along the access road would not be necessary or even desirable.

In the future, it is anticipated that emphasis will be put on herbaceous plantings designed for the improvement of waterfowl habitat. Some thought has been given to planting domestic rice or milo in the lagoon bottom to supply additional feed for waterfowl. Brown-top millet is also under consideration and five acres of it were planted this year.

19. Marsh Stabilization.

b. Maintenance:

Approximately 1,400 hours were logged on wells #1 and #3 for pur-

of marsh stabilization. An estimated 60 million gallons of water was pumped from these two wells. Most of the pumping was done with well #1 into the reservoir pool. This well was used from August to November. Well #3 was used in early November. Sixteen hundred feet of aluminum pipe was rented to convey water to the lagoon.

20. Landscaping.

a. Development:

Landscaping of the headquarters area was completed. Twenty evergreens, 18 deciduous trees and shrubs and 250 hedge seedlings were planted to supplement the 25 trees and shrubs planted in 1959. An effort was made to establish species of plants that would exhibit colorful fall foliage.

21. Habitat Plantings.

b. Maintenance:

Cultivation and replanting of trees and shrubs was held to a minimum. Most plantings on the area were found to be beyond the cultivation state. Fifteen acres of trees and shrubs adjacent to the headquarters area were planted to grass and mowed to improve the beauty of the landscape.

22. General Management of Area and Facilities.

c. Management:

Considerable time was spent by the area manager on map work and conservation planning. In cooperation with the Soil Conservation Service, a corrected map of the area designating present boundaries of all fields, waterways, roads, dikes, etc., was completed. Acreages of all fields were computed and all land was reclassified in relation to land use. More detailed map work was done on individual bench leveled areas.

Coordination of activities with the engineering and operations division again required considerable time from the area manager. Bench leveling, construction of concrete structures and planning of buried conveyor pipe were the minor areas of participation.

Three official pumping tests were made on pump and engine installations during the report period. The area manager and other personnel serviced engines and pumps and also hooked-up conductor pipe for water disposal at each test. The area manager also assisted with the testing procedure and attended two meetings between commission personnel and the contractor.

The fieldman was occupied during the winter with reconditioning and repair of machinery. All farm equipment used for wildlife management purposes was repainted and defective parts were replaced.

General maintenance such as cleanup and repair of buildings, mowing, etc., was carried on throughout the year.

PERSONNEL

The area manager and one fieldman composed the full-time personnel used on the project during the year. Although the fieldman was paid on an hourly basis, and therefore, might be considered part-time help, it was found necessary to employ him on a permanent basis, so that he would be available at all times, and so that he could become more familiar with the operation of the area.

Additional part-time help was hired during the summer months and part-time secretarial help was used throughout the year.

Labor requirements have been of a fluctuating nature depending upon development underway, equipment available, and weather conditions. However, it is anticipated that with the completion of developmental work, a stable labor force can be set up.

AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES (State)

All agricultural operations continued to function under state accounts. A disappointing crop year was experienced. Natural hazards such as hail and disease took their toll as did the conflicting interests of the land leveling procedure, which prevented farming operations on much of the land.

Soil samples were taken on all irrigated areas and on representative dry fields. Altogether, 13 samples were taken and sent to the Soil Testing Laboratory of the University of Nebraska. Results showed that all soils on the area were extremely deficient in nitrogen. Phosphorus and calcium deficiencies were also common. A fertilizer program was set up and initiated (soil testing was charged to W-23-D-10).

Bench leveled areas will be put to a good test this summer since crops have been planted on all the areas and irrigation will be necessary. Touch-up leveling and planning of benches will probably be required as low spots are discovered. Berms, waterways and laterals have been and will continue to be in constant need of repair until grass is permanently established.

All tenants were signed to crop share leases for another year.

UNUSED MATERIALS

All materials that were requisitioned under the project have been used or are in use at the present time.

Materials and equipment that were authorized under the P.S.&E., but were not requisitioned are as follows:

- (1) 1,112 cubic yards of road gravel
- (2) 31,000 trees and shrubs
- (3) 1 road drag
- (4) 1,000 feet of aluminum pipe
- (5) 1 combination bookcase-storage

The road gravel was not purchased because it was decided that it would not be necessary to regravell until the fall of 1960.

The trees and shrubs were not ordered due to the explanation given under Item 12 of "Work Accomplished".

A suitable road drag was constructed by project personnel, eliminating the necessity to buy one.

Purchase of 1,000 feet of aluminum pipe became unnecessary with the advancement of a plan for buried conductor pipe.

The combination bookcase-storage unit was not ordered because it was decided to build cabinets ourselves.

SUBMITTED:

NAME _____

TITLE _____

APPROVED BY:

GAME, FORESTATION AND PARKS COMMISSION

BY _____

TITLE _____

DATE _____