



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION
PRESS SERVICE



Release - Immediate

WASHINGTON, D. C.

September 3, 1931.

CLOSE BIRD REFUGES TO HUNTING
BECAUSE OF DROUGHT EMERGENCY

The Secretary of Agriculture has revoked orders that heretofore permitted hunting on Federal bird reservations at Salt River, Ariz.; Big Lake, Ark.; Tule Lake, Calif.; Deer Flat, Idaho; Nine Pipe and Pablo, Mont.; Rio Grande, N.Mex.; and Cold Springs, Ore. This action was taken, officials of the Biological Survey, U.S. Department of Agriculture, explained, because of the drought emergency confronting wild ducks and geese.

Of the 81 reservations established by Executive orders and placed under the administration of the Biological Survey, these eight are the only ones on parts of which hunting has been permitted. The new series of refuges being established under the migratory bird conservation act of 1929 will be inviolate sanctuaries, on which hunting will not be permitted after they are under administration of the Biological Survey.

The Secretary's order, it was pointed out, is in line with the Presidential proclamation of August 25 shortening the season on ducks, geese, brant, and coot to 30 days and calling for cooperation in the conservation of waterfowl. These emergency measures, it was explained, have been necessitated by severe drought in the Northern Plains States and westward to the Cascade Mountains and in the Prairie Provinces of Canada, the principal wild-fowl breeding grounds of this continent. The drying up of sloughs and marshes in this region has prevented the birds from rearing normal numbers of young, and as a result the annual flight of ducks and geese this fall is expected to be the smallest on record.

----- M -----