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SENEY MARSHES RAPIDLY BECOMING
HAVEN FOR DUCKS AND GEESE AGAIN

Structures for Impounding Water on First Unit of Michigan
Refuge Completed; C. C. C. Prepares Nesting Sites
And Starts Food Plants for Waterfowl.

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Dams, spillways, and other engineering structures for controlling the water supply on the 20,000 acres of the first unit of the Seney Migratory Waterfowl Refuge in Schoolcraft County, Mich., have been completed and by spring the Biological Survey of the U. S. Department of Agriculture hopes to have all the lowland in this unit and a large part of the second unit covered with water for the use of wild fowl. Work on the first unit began in the summer of 1935.

Rains last fall flooded large areas in the completed unit. Snow melting this spring and rain are expected to bring the water up to the desired level. C. C. C. workers will begin developing the 30,000 acres in the second unit this spring.

The Biological Survey expects the refuge ultimately to consist of three adjoining units covering 90,000 acres. A large part of the land in this project is State-owned, and with the cooperation of State officials the Survey is acquiring additional land along the refuge boundary for the State in exchange for State land in the refuge. The State Conservation Department also cooperates with the Survey in developing and maintaining the refuge.

Until the Department of Agriculture began its waterfowl restoration program the Seney area was largely waste-land. Thousands of ducks and geese and other

wildlife used these marshes before they were partly drained. Although drainage was abandoned, the ditches that had been dug lowered the water level so that the area ceased to attract waterfowl in numbers.

The work of the Biological Survey in the Seney area is largely marshland restoration. Earth dikes have been built to impound water, with spillways to regulate the water level. To encourage the return of waterfowl C. C. C. workers prepared nesting sites last year for black ducks and blue-winged teal and planted large quantities of aquatic food plants, which will come up this spring. These workers also cleared land, transplanted trees, sodded road banks, sunk wells, and built roads and fences. A headquarters building, a service building with laboratory for research workers, and other buildings necessary for maintaining the refuge have been completed.

Already the restoration activities are showing results. Large flocks of black ducks together with pintails, mallards, blue-winged teal, and ruddy ducks nested on the refuge last year even though the water-impounding devices were only partly built. The Biological Survey also hopes the Canada Goose will return as a nesting bird of this region. Some 300 Canada geese have been given to the refuge by a Michigan conservationist, and while the birds must be pinioned to keep them from leaving the refuge their young will be free to come and go.

The pinioned birds are expected to attract migrating geese to the refuge, which also is well populated with beaver, deer, raccoon, ruffed grouse, prairie chickens, and sandhill cranes. These marshes are one of the few spots in Michigan visited by these cranes.

Because wild animals and birds often cross over from the refuge to adjoining lands the State plans to acquire and set aside a strip of land about a mile wide around the refuge for the protection of wildlife. Recreation facilities for the public also are planned on this land.