

Waterfowl Estimates for Sand Lake NWR - 10/1/2014

Canada Geese - 1700

Snow Geese - 0

Ducks - 16,000

Swans - 0

Total waterfowl numbers currently using the refuge are low. Northern shovelers, mallards, green-winged teal and gadwalls make up most of the ducks on the refuge.

Most of the Canada geese are on Mud Lake.

Water levels in both Mud Lake and Sand Lake are more than a foot below full pool level.

The soybean harvest is just beginning in the area.

Waterfowl Estimates for Sand Lake NWR - 10/7/2014

Canada Geese - 2100

Snow Geese - 0

Ducks - 15,000

Swans - 100

Total waterfowl numbers using the refuge continue to be relatively low. Green-winged teal, northern shovelers, mallards, and gadwalls still make up most of the ducks on the refuge. More diving ducks and fewer blue-winged teal have been observed in some of the surrounding wetlands since last week.

Tundra swans began moving into the refuge area over the past weekend.

Temperatures in the refuge area dropped to 25 degrees last Friday night, but freezing temperatures are not predicted through the coming week.

The soybean harvest in the area is in full swing.

Waterfowl Estimates for Sand Lake NWR - 10/15/2014

Canada Geese - 2000

Snow Geese - 0

Ducks - 12,000

Swans - 100

There was very little change in waterfowl numbers since last week. Green-winged teal, northern shovelers, and gadwalls make up most of the ducks on the refuge. There are still some blue-winged teal in the area.

High temperatures in the 50's and 60's, and lows in the 30's and 40's are predicted through the coming week.

The soybean harvest in the area is nearing the end, and the corn harvest is just getting started.

Waterfowl Estimates for Sand Lake NWR - 10/22/2014

Canada Geese - 2400

Snow Geese - 0

Ducks - 15,000

Swans - 130

There was a small increase in waterfowl numbers on the refuge from last week. The biggest change was an increase in mallard numbers, and a drop in green-winged teal and northern shovelers.

Swan numbers in Brown and McPherson Counties continue to increase.

High temperatures are predicted to remain in the 60's and 70's the rest of this week, and then drop into the 50's by next week.

The soybean harvest in the area is mostly over, and the corn harvest is still in the early stages.

Waterfowl Estimates for Sand Lake NWR - 10/28/2014

Canada Geese - 3500

Snow Geese - 50

Ducks - 22,000

Swans - 130

There was a movement of waterfowl into the area over the past weekend. The first white-fronted geese were seen on the 24th, and the first snow geese arrived on the 25th. There are currently about 1000 white-fronts on the refuge, and small, scattered flocks of snow geese in the area.

Mallard and pintail numbers increased, and small flocks of canvasback, lesser scaup, and ruddy ducks moved into the refuge pools.

There are still good numbers of swans in Brown and McPherson Counties.

High temperatures are predicted to be in the 40's and 50's in the coming week, with lows dropping below freezing on several nights.

The corn harvest is picking up, but still less than 50% completed in the refuge area. .

Waterfowl Estimates for Sand Lake NWR - 11/5/2014

Canada Geese - 4800

Snow Geese - 27,000

Ducks - 93,000

Swans - 340

There was a major movement of waterfowl into the area on Monday night. Mallards make up most of the new ducks on the refuge, but there were also increases in gadwall, lesser scaup, and redheads. More flocks of mallards have been seen feeding in some of the harvested fields yesterday and today. The first buffleheads of the season were observed on Tuesday.

The snow geese using the refuge are currently 1 to 2 miles south of highway 10, along the east edge of Sand Lake, and have been feeding to the northwest. There have been good-sized flocks of snow geese reported in the Groton area, and ten to fifteen thousand using Putney Slough.

High temperatures are predicted to be in the 40's and 50's through Sunday, then dropping to the 20's on Monday and Tuesday of next week.

The corn harvest is at least 75% completed in the refuge area.

Waterfowl Estimates for Sand Lake NWR - 11/12/2014

Canada Geese - 1600

Snow Geese - 6000

Ducks - 8500

Swans - 25

Waterfowl numbers peaked on the refuge over the past weekend, but numbers quickly dropped with the winter storm that passed through the area on Sunday night and Monday. Sand Lake received about 4 inches of snow from this storm. Both Mud Lake and Sand Lake were mostly frozen over on Tuesday. Today there are only several small open water areas on Sand Lake.

Temperatures are predicted to drop to 11 degrees below zero tomorrow night and highs are only predicted to be in the teens for the next several days.

Waterfowl Estimates for Sand Lake NWR - 11/19/2014

Waterfowl numbers have dwindled at Sand Lake since last week. There are only several hundred Canada geese and several thousand mallards remaining in the area. The only open water left on the refuge are two small areas near the water control structures and a small area in the river channel north of Weismantel Grade.

This will be the final report for the fall migration, and the last report that I will be sending out, as I will be retiring on January 3. I hope these reports have been useful. Take care.