



Pahranagat National Wildlife Refuge

Important Information for Hunters and other Wildlife Enthusiasts

Why are the water levels low in Lower Pahranagat Lake and other areas at Pahranagat National Wildlife Refuge?

- Precipitation in the Pahranagat Valley is not consistent, thus open water and wetland habitat on the Refuge is maintained almost exclusively by surface water flow from Ash and Crystal Springs located in the upper Pahranagat Valley. Water flowing from the two springs travels 12-15 miles south before reaching Upper Pahranagat Lake at the north end of the Refuge.
- **About 80% of the annual inflows to the Refuge occur between November and April** primarily based on the water rights for the Refuge and for other water rights holders in the Pahranagat Valley. **Inflows to the Refuge drop dramatically during the summer** months when upstream irrigators and landowners use surface water from the springs to flood fields and pasture north of the Refuge. As a result, surface water inflow to the Refuge tend to "start" on an normal year near the end of October and "end" on a normal year sometime around the beginning of May. During the intervening months of May through October inflows are negligible.
- In general, the only time that the above scenario may be different is if the Pahranagat Valley has consistent precipitation whereby the irrigators/water rights owners north of the Refuge do not need as much Ash and Crystal Springs water throughout the summer. Summer monsoon rains did fall this year, but they were primarily in late summer. The winter, spring and early summer were very dry in terms of precipitation.
- The Refuge worked throughout the summer to spread the water throughout the Refuge to maintain wildlife habitat, including at Middle Marsh and Lower Lake. The Refuge made several small pushes of water from the Upper Lake through the system during the summer, with one as recently as mid-September.
- The situation described above is not ideal for the opening weekend and first month of waterfowl season, or for wildlife observation in general. Overall, though, the Refuge is managing the water resources within our existing water rights as best we can to meet the purpose of the Refuge – which is to provide habitat for migratory birds.

For more information, stop by the Refuge Office or contact the Manager at 775/725-3417.