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FEDERAL RELIEF PROGRAM WILL BENEFIT WATERFOWL

Birds, as well as man and the forests, are benefiting by the Federal unemployment relief program, says Paul G. Redington, Chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Three camps of the Civilian Conservation Corps, he explains, are improving refuges established and maintained by the Federal Government for the protection of birds. One of these, the Blackwater Migratory Bird Refuge, near Cambridge, Md., is a breeding ground for black ducks and blue-winged teal. Mallards and pintails also concentrate on the Blackwater marshes during the migration season, and many shorebirds find sanctuary there. The other two refuges now being improved by the Conservation Corps are used by the birds principally during migration and in the winter season-- Swanquarter Migratory Bird Refuge, in North Carolina, a notable and St. Marks Migratory Bird Refuge, in Florida, an area frequented by Canada geese, resting ground for wild fowl, including swans, ducks, sanderlings, and other shorebirds. St. Marks refuge comprises 19,403 acres; Swanquarter 8,803; and Blackwater, 7,651 acres, and all were established under the terms of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act in furtherance of treaty obligations for the protection of birds that migrate between the United States and Canada.

To facilitate administration of these refuge areas, the approximately 200 men in each of the conservation camps are making roads and trails, building cabins

and boat landings, and clearing boundary lines. They are erecting lookout towers, clearing fire lanes, and at strategic points are making caches for fire-fighting tools. The headquarters sites are being improved, and telephone lines will be extended to some of the lookout towers.

To make the refuges more attractive to the birds, plans are under way for establishing ponds by constructing a number of small dams. At St. Marks refuge the camp will also construct equipment to be used in the bureau's study of the migratory and other habits of wild fowl. Through banding operations the Biological Survey is determining the routes traversed by Canada geese to their various northern breeding grounds. With the required equipment, officials and cooperators at the refuge will capture the wildfowl, attach metal bands to their legs, and release them. The records then made, together with reports from sportsmen and others who later kill or capture the banded birds, will yield valuable information on the times and distances of the migratory movements of these birds, and on the relations of the banding areas to other localities frequented by these species.

"Besides helping in the conservation of the Nation's resource in wild fowl, this unemployment-relief work," says Mr. Redington, "will be of great educational value to the conservation-corps workers and to the public. Through actual experience in wild-life conservation and through talks, motion pictures, and printed information provided for them, they will gain an understanding and appreciation of the value of our natural wild-life resources which they can share with their families and friends."