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FOURTH ANNIVERSARY
OF CCC ORIGINATED
ON WILDLIFE REFUGE

U. S. BIOLOGICAL SURVEY
CONGRATULATES BOYS
ON "GOOD JOB"

Civilian Conservation Corps boys doing development work on the Valentine Migratory Waterfowl Refuge at Valentine, in the heart of the Nebraska sandhills, have done a good job, says Ira N. Gabrielsen, Chief of the U. S. Biological Survey, in congratulating them on the fourth anniversary of the C. C. C.

The camp at Valentine is celebrating today (April 4) with an old-fashioned open house, to which "all of our neighbors are invited", according to Joe M. Madison, assistant civil engineer at the refuge.

"Our guest will be shown through camp so that they may see the environment in which members of this organization live," Madison promises. "When the party reaches the mess-hall, we will have some product of C. C. C. baking and coffee to give them a taste of how we are fed. Our school building, too, will be open so that the opportunity that is afforded by the efforts of all supervisory and enrolled personnel to better a man during his enrollment in the C. C. C. may be seen. Those of our guests who wish to see further will be shown the projects near the camp."

C. C. C. boys on 17 wildlife refuges are contributing man-power for the Biological Survey's nation-wide refuge program, says Chief Gabrielsen. They are, in general, doing two important things: Making the areas more attractive to the birds and making the refuges easier to administer.

One of these areas, that at Valentine, including such well-known and important waterfowl lakes as Dewey, Pelican, Hackberry, Ende, Marsh, and Whitewater, was created by Executive order of August 14, 1935, and is one of the Biological Survey's outstanding migratory waterfowl conservation projects. It includes, at the present time, about 49,613 acres, and serves as sanctuary principally for mallards, blue-winged teals, pintails, baldpates, redheads, gadwalls, and canvasbacks.

Ring-necked pheasants were introduced into the area a few years ago and have increased greatly. Other birds using this area extensively are sharp-tailed grouse, prairie chickens, sand grebes, white pelicans, great blue herons, black crowned night heron, American bitterns, and black terns. Such fur-bearing animals as minks, weasels, badgers, skunks, marmots, coyotes, beavers, and raccoons are present, also, in fair numbers.

The G. C. C. boys' accomplishments make these wild creatures feel at home on the Valentine Refuge, says the Survey Chief. Their work, since establishment of the camp May, 1935, has been to increase the available water supply and get better distribution to the many lakes. Two diversion ditches, one from Gordon Creek to Hackberry Lake, and one from there to Dewey Lake, were either cleaned out or built, and the results obtained justified the work. ^{the water level in} for/both lakes was raised substantially.

A five-wire fence, almost one hundred miles in length, has been built, and a large number of cattle and auto gates strategically placed to facilitate necessary travel. Appropriate signs have also been put up for directional and identification purposes. A group of administration buildings was constructed on the north shore of Hackberry Lake. Skilled laborers and technicians were employed to carry on their trades and direct the activities of the G. C. C. boys. The carellers have been given every opportunity to learn a craft or trade in which they evinced an interest. -g -

For controlling prairie fires, a hundred foot lookout-tower was erected on the high range of hills on the south side of Macberry Lake. This tower has proved its worth for fire detection work done during the summers, when fires as far as 35 miles away were discovered, and effective action taken to prevent their spreading.

Several bridges, spillways, and control gates have already been constructed. Dams were built to conserve run-off waters and have proved effective. Nesting islands for the use of waterfowl have been constructed in a number of lakes. Bird feeding stations were erected over the refuge, and undoubtedly have saved many birds. Several hundred thousand trees and shrubs have been planted. All these projects stand out as permanent markers to the G. G. C., and have contributed to our national wildlife resources.

"This work", says Dr. Gabrielsen, "is part of the restoration of our American wildlife, an invaluable resource of great benefit to all Americans. The next time that you see a formation of mallards passing high overhead and note the smooth poetry of their flight, you can say to yourself, 'Well, it may be that they are up there because the G. G. C. boys have been doing a good job down at the Valentine Refuge'".