

Nayanquing Point Manager's Update

2016 Season - Week ending 11/27



Weather

Temperatures early in the week reached freezing and about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch covered the area. There were light and variable winds with mostly cloudy skies all week. By Wednesday afternoon most of the ice was gone and birds seemed to move back into the area. Snow and sleet combined with cold temperatures made for a decent holiday weekend for waterfowl hunters.

Waterfowl Abundance

Duck numbers are down slightly, most likely due to ice conditions earlier in the week. Canada geese in the refuge count this week as well.

Hunting Conditions

This coming fall, waterfowl hunters can expect excellent corn cover throughout the area. Only two zones in the south field experienced goose damage. Millet and buckwheat production was excellent in all fields. Water levels on Lake Huron/Saginaw Bay are higher than last year which will allow us to begin flooding the refuge and hunting fields sooner.

North Field Zones - Zones 2-9

Corn cover is excellent with heights between 9-10 feet; buckwheat and millet plots are excellent. Water depths vary across the field from 6-30 inches.

North Marsh

The north marsh is currently in draw down. There are small pockets of water remaining on the eastern edge and the south end. Access to these areas will be extremely difficult. A long term plan is in place to improve this unit, an aerially herbicide application is scheduled for the fall.

Middle Field Zones - Zones 10-20

Corn cover is good with heights between 8-9 feet; buckwheat and millet plots are excellent. Water depths vary across the field from 6-18 inches.

East Marsh

Water levels will be approximately 10 inches lower than last year to make it more attractive to waterfowl. Water levels vary from north to south with deeper water on the south end. Boat access is available on the south end by the observation tower.

South Field Zones - Zones 21-26

Corn cover is excellent with the exception of 24 and 26 which have ground blinds. Heights between 7-8 feet; buckwheat and millet plots are excellent. Water depths vary across the field from 6-30 inches.

Hunter Numbers

For the week (Monday – Sunday) we had 266 hunter trips. Party sizes decreased early in the week due to ice. The holiday weekend brought in a few hunters on Friday. Lowest party size was 0 on Tuesday afternoon and highest was 21 on Friday afternoon. Running total as of Monday morning is

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3787 hunter trips.

Waterfowl Harvest

For the week (Monday – Sunday) we had 185 ducks harvested and 3 geese, 0.70 ducks/hunter trip. Hunters are harvesting mostly mallard and black ducks (75%) and shoveler (17%). Running total through Monday morning is 3595 ducks and 76 Canada geese and 1 white front goose.

What To Expect This Week

Temperatures will be in the upper 40's reaching lows in the 30's in the evening. Rain and snow showers are forecasted for the end of the season this weekend. Winds will be predominately from the wsw with gusts up the 30mph and by the end of the week winds will be shifting to the WNW.

Upcoming Events

Waterfowl season closes December 4th. We will be conducting a muzzleload deer drawing on Sunday, December 4th at 11:30 following the waterfowl draw. This permit will be valid for the first seven days of the muzzleload season beginning on December 5th.

Other Comments

Important changes for 2016

Check station hours are extended to 4pm.

Singles areas have changed from 1-6 to 4, 9, 12, 13, 22 and 23. These areas may be taken by singles or parties in the draw.

Motor ditches (furrows within the field) are located on the east side of all hunting zones.

You may register up to two absentee hunters at the time of the draw.

Add-on hunters and self-registration has been eliminated.