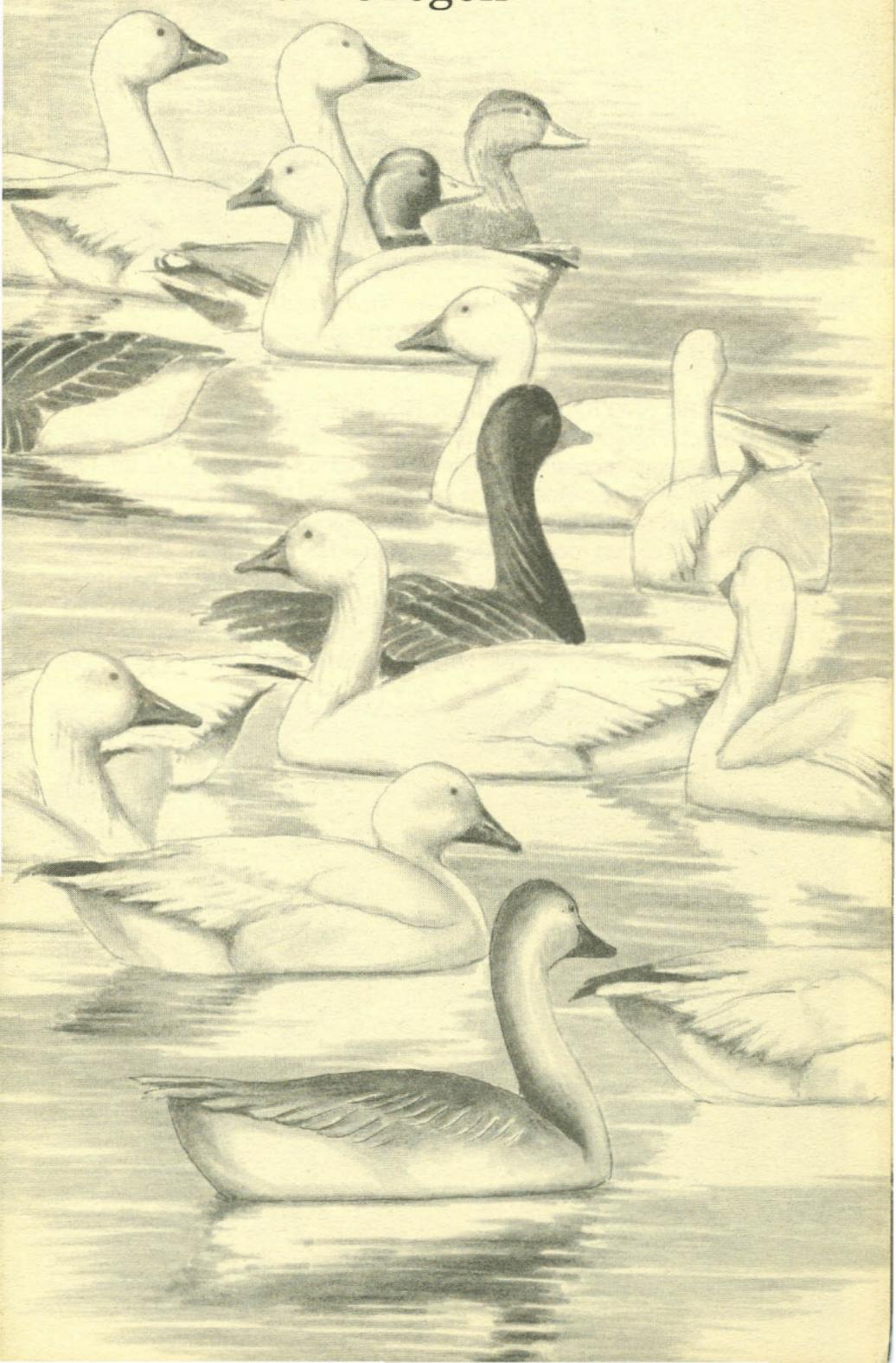


# Klamath Basin

## National Wildlife Refuges

California - Oregon



# Enjoy Your Visit

## VISITOR CENTER

You are encouraged to stop in at the center when you first arrive. Klamath Basin wildlife are colorfully described on a series of exhibits in the center. You can also obtain information regarding wildlife viewing opportunities, road conditions, upcoming center events, and refuge rules and regulations from refuge personnel or from an outdoor information exhibit. The center is open every weekday and on weekends during periods of heavy use.

## WILDLIFE OBSERVATION

The Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuges, especially Tule Lake and Lower Klamath, are internationally famous for their abundance and diversity of wildlife. The refuges' diverse wildlife and habitats are a photographer's delight. Photographic opportunities abound along the self-guided auto tour routes. Wildlife along these routes is often accustomed to autos so your car can be a good photo blind.

## VISITATION HOURS

Public use areas are open during daylight hours, except as modified by refuge hunting regulations. Overnight camping is not permitted on any of the refuges.

## AUTO TOUR ROUTES

Visitors are encouraged to use the self-guided auto tour routes on Tule Lake and Lower Klamath NWRs. In most instances, the routes are improved dike roads and are easily traveled. The variety of habitats along the tour routes provide views of numerous species of wildlife. Portions of the routes may be closed during hunting season and when wet conditions prevail.

## CANOE TRAILS

Self-guided canoe trails are available on Upper Klamath and Tule Lake NWRs. The best time to see them is spring through fall when weather conditions are favorable and wildlife abounds. Descriptive leaflets are available for both trails.

## HUNTING

Public hunting is permitted on the refuges. Hunters are responsible for familiarizing themselves with current refuge and state hunting regulations. Descriptive hunt leaflets are available.

## FISHING

Public fishing is permitted only on selected portions of the Upper Klamath and Klamath Forest NWRs. Anglers must familiarize themselves with current state fishing regulations, available at sporting goods stores.

## GROUP PROGRAMS

Special programs and guided tours for schools, clubs, etc. may be arranged by contacting refuge headquarters.

For more information contact:  
Refuge Manager  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Route 1, Box 74  
Tulelake, CA 96134  
Phone (916) 667-2231

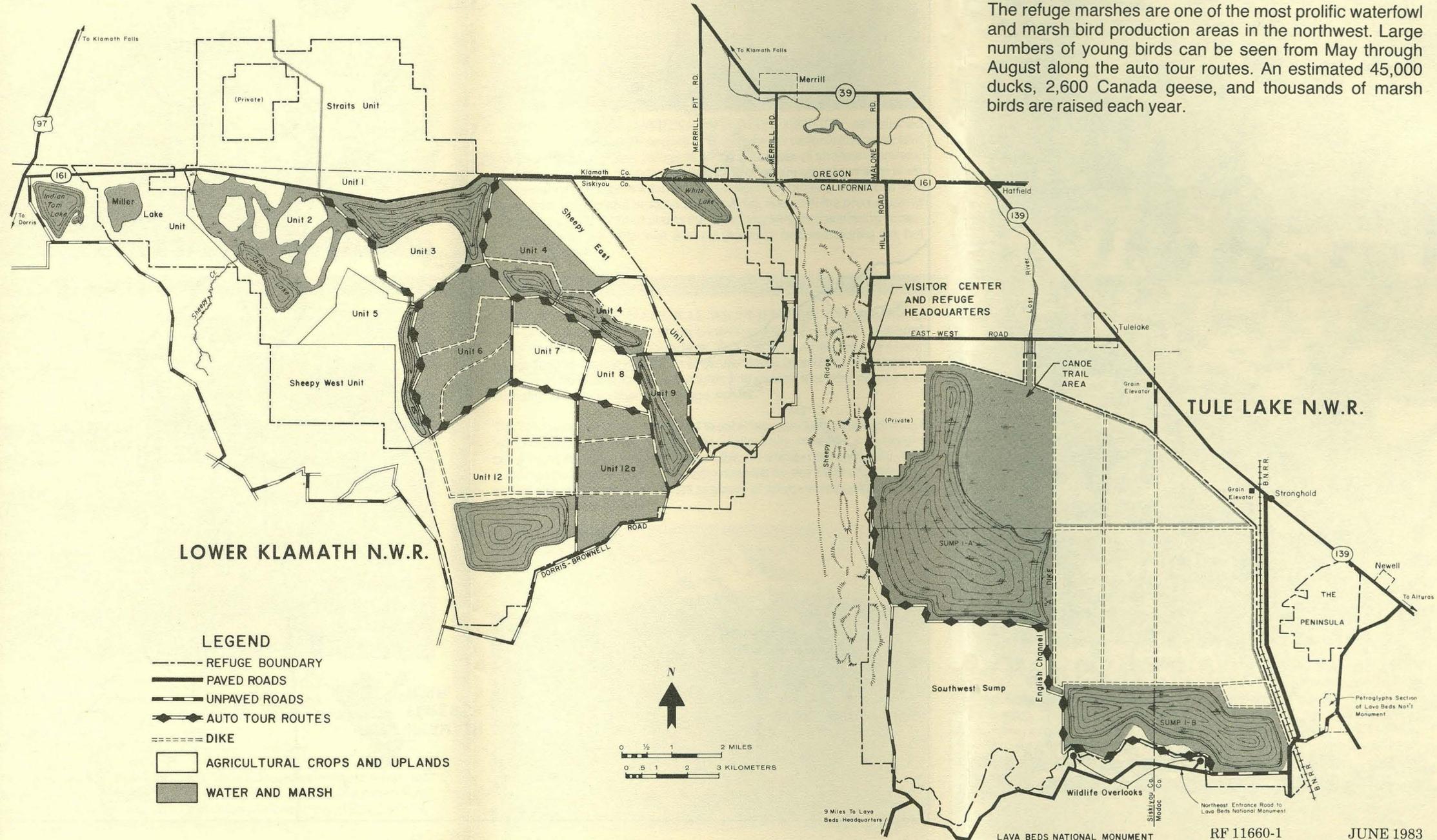
# SEASONAL WILDLIFE HIGHLIGHTS

**FALL**  
 August and September are good months of the year to view a variety of marsh birds such as pelicans, cormorants, egrets, herons, gulls, terns, and grebes. They usually migrate out of the Basin by late October. Waterfowl migration begins in late August and September when pintails and white-fronted geese arrive. Peak numbers of nearly 1 million ducks and geese are normally present around early November. Major species

**WINTER**  
 From December through February the Klamath Basin hosts the largest wintering concentration of bald eagles in the lower 48 states. More than 500 of these majestic raptors can be found on or near the Tule Lake and Lower Klamath NWRs. They feed primarily on the thousands of waterfowl that also winter on these refuges. Winter weather conditions can at times be harsh to the refuge visitor but the sight of large concentrations of eagles and waterfowl can warm the soul!

**SPRING**  
 The period, March through May, is alive with activity as waterfowl and shorebirds stop in the Klamath Basin on their way north to Alaskan and Canadian breeding grounds. Here they rest to build up sufficient body fat to carry them through this long migration. Also, thousands of marsh birds and waterfowl return to nest in the Klamath Basin marshlands.

**SUMMER**  
 The refuge marshes are one of the most prolific waterfowl and marsh bird production areas in the northwest. Large numbers of young birds can be seen from May through August along the auto tour routes. An estimated 45,000 ducks, 2,600 Canada geese, and thousands of marsh birds are raised each year.





NESTING PELICANS AND CORMORANTS.

## Once Extensive Marshes

Historically, the Klamath Basin was dominated by about 185,000 acres of shallow lakes and extensive marshes. These lakes and marshes attracted peak fall concentrations of over 6 million waterfowl and supported large concentrations of marsh birds such as pelicans, cormorants, egrets, and herons.

## Marshes Shrink Drastically

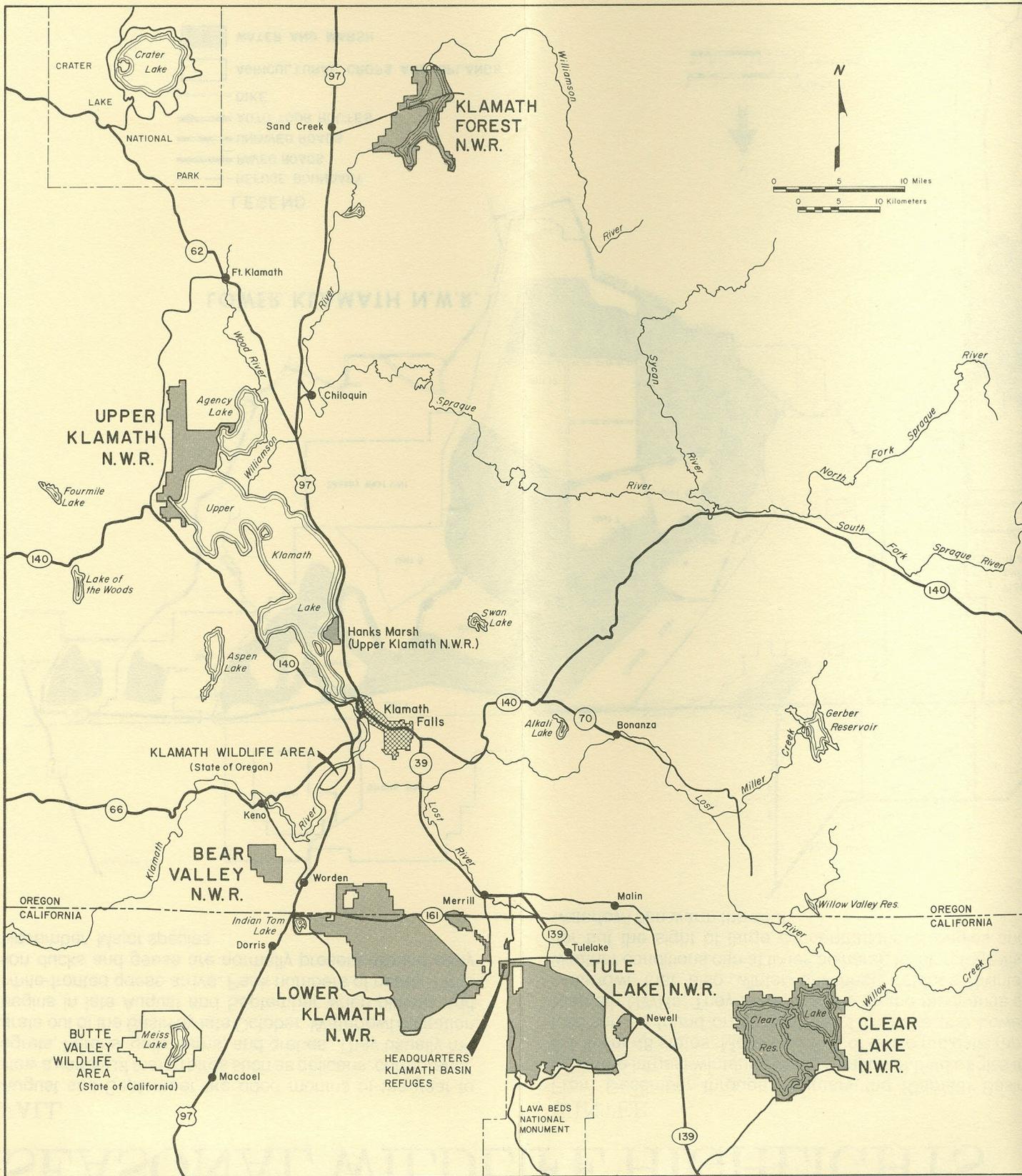
Today less than 25% of the historic wetland acres remain. In 1905, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation initiated the Klamath Reclamation Project to convert the marshes and lakes of Lower Klamath and Tule Lake to agricultural lands. Oregon and California gave to the federal government any lands that could be reclaimed from under the waters of Lower Klamath and Tule Lakes. As these lakes and marshes were dried up the land was converted to irrigated agriculture and opened to settlement. Today, the Basin's extensive agriculture economy is mostly based on lands converted from wetlands to agriculture by government and private efforts.

## Refuges Protect What Remains

To conserve the Basin's remaining wildlife values six National Wildlife Refuges have been established. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages and protects this valuable wildlife habitat and regulates wildlife oriented recreation. Even though the Basin's marsh habitat has been greatly reduced, the refuges still attract the majority of migrating Pacific Flyway waterfowl and support peak fall concentrations of nearly one million birds—one of the largest concentrations in the United States. The refuges agricultural and water programs are jointly managed by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

## Diverse Habitats Support Diverse Wildlife

A variety of habitats exist on the six refuges — marshes, open water, grassy meadows, coniferous forests, sagebrush and juniper grasslands, agricultural land, and cliffs and rocky slopes. This variety supports diverse and abundant populations of resident and migratory wildlife. A total of 411 wildlife species have been observed or are considered present on the refuges.





GEESE CONCENTRATION ON TULE LAKE.



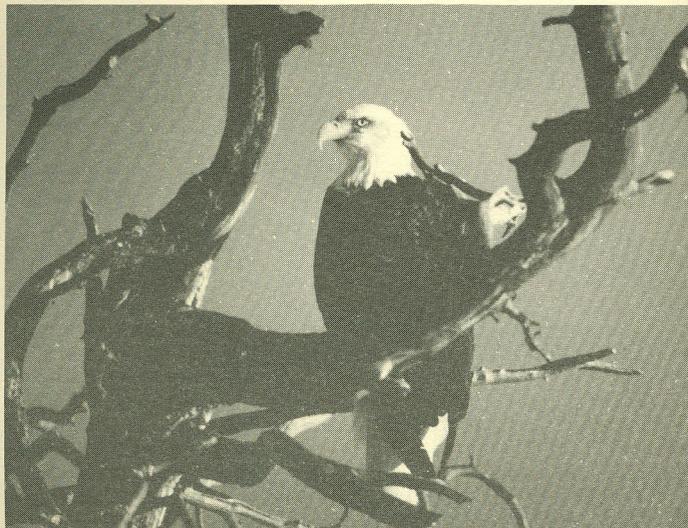
SHORT-EARED OWL.

TULE LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, established in 1928, comprises 38,908 acres of mostly open water and croplands. Approximately 15,000 acres are leased by local farmers under a program administered by USBR. This land is primarily planted to cereal grain and potatoes and is completely harvested. Another 2,000 acres are farmed by FWS personnel or refuge permittees to grow cereal grain, alfalfa, and grass. These crops, together with the waste grain and potatoes from the lease program, serve as a major food source for migrating and wintering waterfowl.

The refuge marsh areas provide excellent nesting and brood-rearing habitat for waterfowl and other marsh birds such as egrets, herons, and grebes. The rocky cliffs of the Peninsula and Sheepy Ridge are homes to a wide variety of hawks, owls, eagles, and falcons.

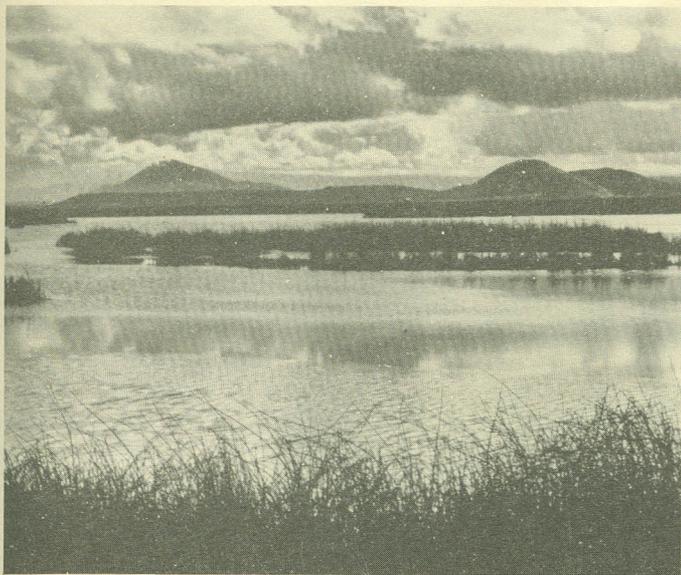


BEAR VALLEY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE was established in 1978 to protect a major nighttime roosting site used by bald eagles in the winter. An ongoing acquisition/easement program will protect a total of 4,120 acres when completed. Each year the Basin hosts the largest wintering concentration of bald eagles in the contiguous 48 states. The refuge roost is one of five roosts in the Basin used by the eagles. It consists of large stands of old growth timber which protect eagles each night from the harsh winter elements. In recent years, close to 300 eagles have used the refuge roost in one night. To help the eagles survive the winter this refuge is closed to the public from November until April.



KLAMATH FOREST NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE was established in 1958 when the majority of its 16,377 acres was purchased from the Klamath Indians. Smaller parcels were acquired from private owners. The large natural marsh that makes up the majority of the refuge is an important nesting and migration area for waterfowl.

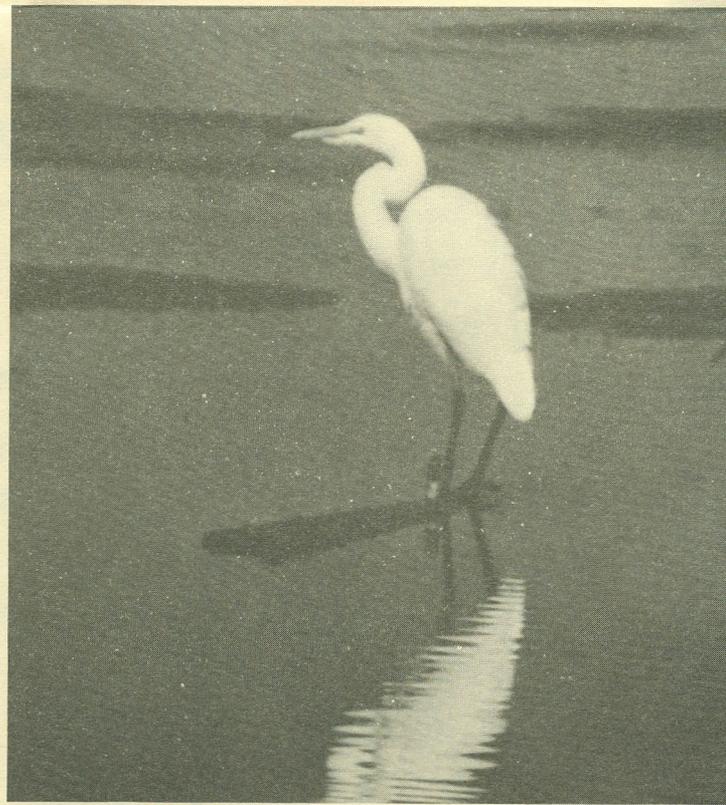
The meadowlands around the marsh are attractive feeding areas for sandhill cranes, shorebirds, waterfowl, and birds of prey. The pine forest adjacent to the meadows supports an interesting diversity of forest wildlife species not found on most of the other Basin refuges.



**LOWER KLAMATH NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**, established by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1908, was our nation's first waterfowl refuge. This 51,713 acre refuge is an excellent mix of shallow marshes, open water, grassy uplands, and croplands that are used by marsh birds and waterfowl. Water is intensively managed to: provide waterfowl and marsh bird nesting and brood-rearing habitat; help with the production of cereal grains and wetland plants that feed migrating and wintering waterfowl; and to curtail waterfowl disease losses to botulism during the hot summer months.

**UPPER KLAMATH NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**, established in 1928, is a 14,376 acre refuge consisting entirely of marsh and open water that is accessible only by boat. The marsh provides excellent nesting and brood-rearing habitat for waterfowl and colonial birds such as pelicans, herons, and egrets. Bald eagles and osprey that nest nearby can sometimes be seen fishing in refuge waters.

The refuge marsh areas are closed to public access during spring through fall to protect fragile nesting activities. Visitors can, however, use several creeks and the open water of Pelican Bay for wildlife oriented recreation. A self-guided canoe trail, jointly administered by the FWS and the U.S. Forest Service, traverses a small segment of refuge marsh and provides excellent views of wildlife.



GREAT EGRET

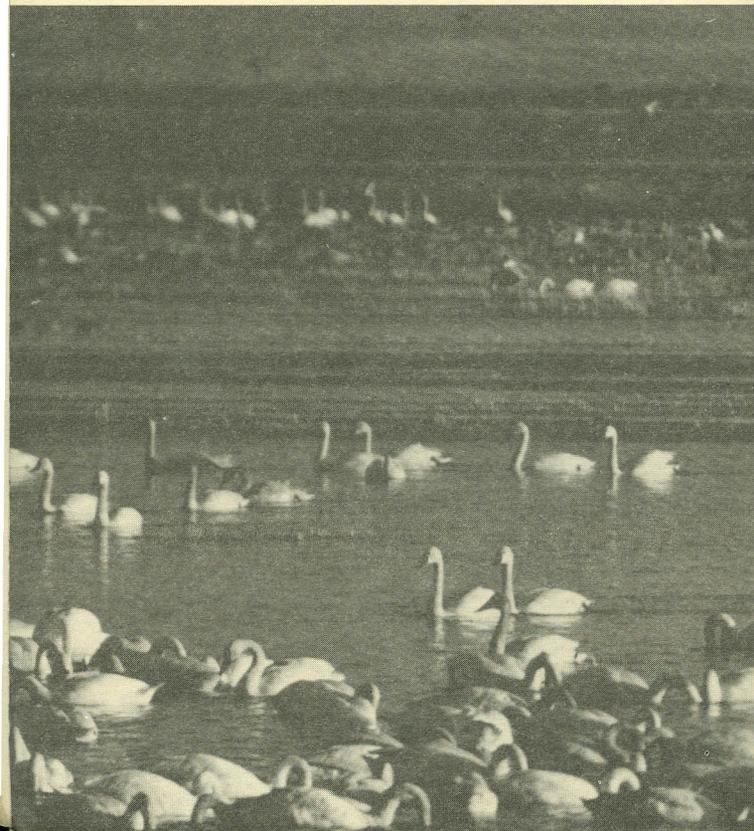


**CLEAR LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE** was established in 1911. This 33,440 acre refuge consists of a 20,000 acre lake surrounded by upland habitat of cheatgrass, low sagebrush, and scattered stands of juniper. The lake is the primary source of water for the agricultural program of the eastern half of the Klamath Basin. Its water levels are regulated by the USBR. Small islands in the lake provide nesting sites for pelicans, cormorants, and other colonial birds. The upland areas provide habitat for pronghorn antelope, mule deer, and sage grouse. Because of the fragileness of the refuge habitat and the easily disturbed nature of the birds that nest there, the refuge is closed to visitors use from spring through fall.



AVOCETS AND PHALAROPES FEEDING ON BRINE SHRIMP.

TUNDRA SWANS IN FLOODED GRAIN STUBBLE.



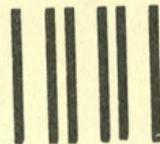
VISITORS ENJOY WILDLIFE WITH MT. SHASTA IN THE BACKGROUND.

NEWLY HATCHED CANADA GEESE.



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
KLAMATH BASIN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE  
ROUTE 1, BOX 74  
TULELAKE, CA 96134

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