

was temporarily dropped.

The Trempealeau Refuge was operated as a satellite of the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge. Through the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Works Progress Administration, both government sponsored programs of work, the refuge staff, and contract work, the refuge was cleaned up; boundaries fenced and posted; a headquarters, shop and residence built; and a half million trees planted. Efforts continued during the 40's, 50's, and 60's to negotiate the purchase of the Delta Fish and Fur Farm; but each time, no price agreement could be reached when funds were available.

Pt. 2

In the late 1960's oak wilt disease threatened to destroy many of the red oaks which had become established on the uplands of the refuge. It was also recognized that black locust trees, planted in the 1930's, were growing too well - they were encroaching on the small remnant prairie areas existing only in a few isolated places in the valley. As a result the refuge staff has spent thousands of man hours cutting and burning oak and locust trees; to halt the advance of oak wilt and control the spread of locusts. As large sections were opened up, typical native prairie grass stands were planted to reestablish the prairie as a reminder of how the area appeared before white settlers came to live there. Portions are burned yearly to prevent growth of wood vegetation as a further means of helping the renewal of the prairie.

About 40 years ago work was progressing on the original 708 acres of the refuge; and another attempt was being made to complete the acquisition of the land by Congress. In 1976 Dairyland Power Company purchased the Delta Fish and Fur Farm and exchanged it for other Fish and Wildlife Service lands. The agency acquired about 4,800 acres through exchange and purchase in 1979. The recent acquisition will allow the refuge to meet its original objectives in providing waterfowl habitat. It is expected that the fowl population will reach up to 25,000 ducks and 2,000 to 3,000 geese within a few years. The excellent food conditions such as the expansive wild rice areas and the submergent vegetation as pond weed, wild celery, as well as the rich vertebrate population will provide the best feeding grounds for both migratory and nesting waterfowl. Species such as blue wing teal, widgeon, and other marsh feeding birds, will find the marshes attractive. The surrounding croplands on the Trempealeau prairie will benefit field feeding species, such as mallards and Canada geese, which will make flights to the farm lands to feed.