

Wetland Habitat Conditions – Fall 2019

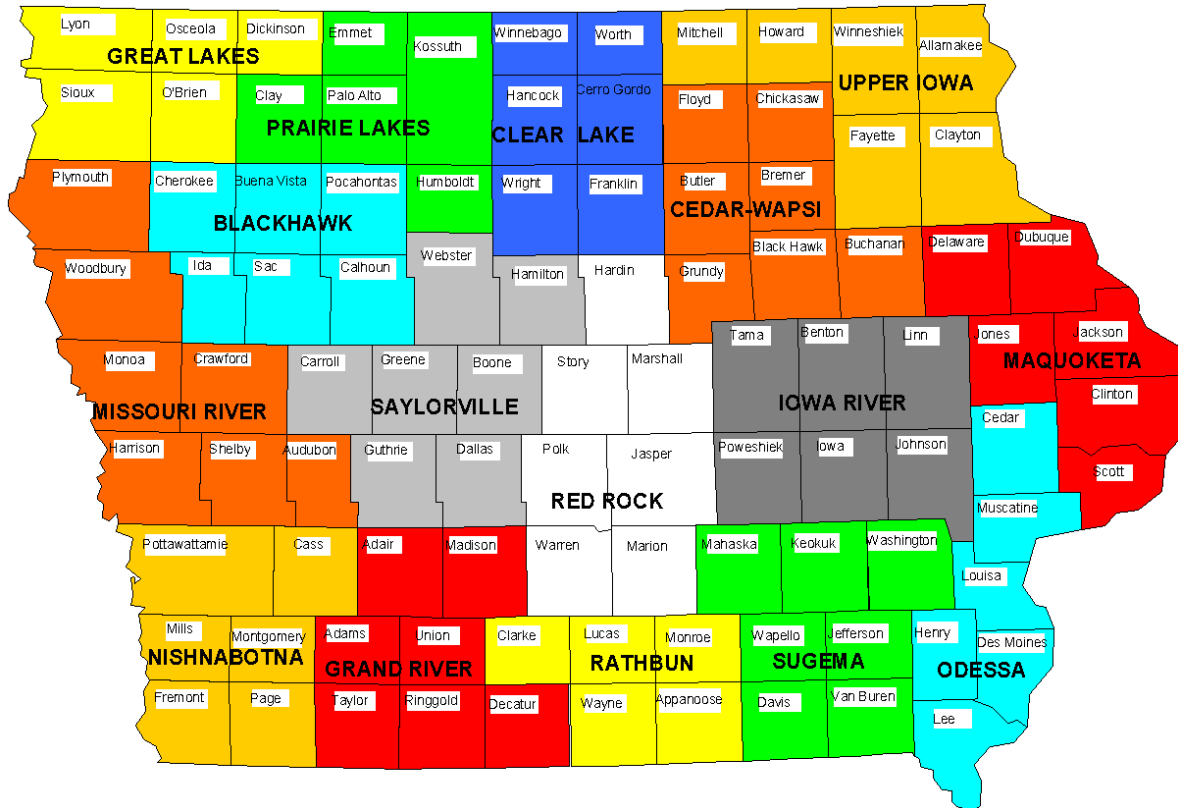
(Some Reports Week of October 25, 2019)

DNR WILDLIFE UNITS

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Definitions Of Terms Commonly Used In Descriptions Of Areas -

- Crest water level refers to the established optimum or target water level for the lake or wetland or the maximum water level legally allowed on the lake or wetland.
 - Emergent vegetation refers to plants like cattails, bulrushes, burreed, etc., that are rooted on the bottom of the marsh but project above the surface of the water.
 - Submergent vegetation refers to plants like sago pond weed, curly leave pondweed, wild celery, coontail, etc., that grow beneath the surface of the water. The tops of these plants sometimes reach the surface in shallow water. Water clarity and fish populations largely determine the amount of submergent vegetation in wetlands. Wetlands with good water clarity and few, if any, fish usually have good submergent plant communities that attract a wide variety of ducks.
 - WMA is the acronym for Wildlife Management Area, which includes lands owned and managed by the Wildlife Bureau of the DNR.
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- WPA is the acronym for Waterfowl Production Area, which includes lands owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and, in most cases, managed by the Wildlife Bureau of the DNR.
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BLACK HAWK WILDLIFE UNIT

Clint Maddix, Wildlife Biologist

Updated: 10/09/2019

BUENA VISTA COUNTY

Little Storm Lake

Water levels: 8 to 10 inches low

Vegetation: Very little to no submergent vegetation, losing a lot of emergent vegetation as well.

Notes:

Storm Lake

Water levels: At or near crest

Vegetation: Little to no vegetation on the lake.

Notes:

CALHOUN COUNTY

South Twin Lake

Water levels: Near crest

Vegetation: Little to no submergent vegetation, good amount of emergent vegetation around edge of lake.

Notes:

CARROLL COUNTY

Artesian Lake

Water levels: At or near crest

Vegetation: Wetland is full of emergent vegetation with the summer draw down that took place.

Notes: Wetland could possibly be drawn down this Fall to facilitate new water control structure being installed.

POCAHONTAS COUNTY

Little Clear Lake

Water levels: At or near crest.

Vegetation: Body of water is full of submergent vegetation, along with a good ring of emergent vegetation around lake.

Notes:

Lizard Lake

Water levels: At or near crest.

Vegetation: Some submergent vegetation, good stand of emergent vegetation on North and South end of lake.

Notes:

Shimon Marsh

Water levels: At crest

Vegetation: Some submergent vegetation, good stand of emergent vegetation around edge of wetland.

Notes:

Sunken Grove

Water levels: At or near crest

Vegetation: Little to no submergent vegetation, emergent vegetation around most of lake.

Notes:

SAC COUNTY

Black Hawk Wildlife Area

Water levels: State Marsh is at crest, DU Marsh is at crest.

Vegetation: Good stands of emergent vegetation with summer draw down on both marshes.

Notes:

Black Hawk Lake

Water levels: At or near crest

Vegetation: Little to no emergent vegetation, but a good amount of submergent vegetation on main lake.

Notes:

Burrow's Pond

Water levels: Main wetland on Burrow's Pond complex is dry to be able to make repairs for water level management. Other satellite wetlands are at or near crest.

Vegetation: All wetlands have a good healthy amount of emergent vegetation.

Notes: Expect main wetland to stay dry through the rest of the hunting season.

Kiowa Marsh

Water levels: All wetlands are at crest pool except for satellite wetlands and wetland north of Kiowa Proper to facilitate consolidation and vegetating the dikes with newly constructed water control structures.

Vegetation: All wetlands have a good amount of submergent and emergent vegetation except for Heidenreich Wetland that is low on emergent vegetation. Wetlands that have Arrowhead Lilies are starting to die back.

Notes:

Sac City Wetland Complex

Water levels: At or near crest on all wetlands.

Vegetation: Good amount of both emergent and submergent vegetation.

Notes:

Tomahawk Marsh

Water levels: At or near crest.

Vegetation: Good amount of submergent vegetation, muskrats are slowly whittling down amount of emergent vegetation on marsh.

Notes:

CEDAR-WAPSI WILDLIFE UNIT

Jason Auel, Wildlife Biologist

Updated: Oct. 17, 2019

BREMER COUNTY

Leopold Area

Water levels: All wetlands are at crest..

Vegetation: Abundant emergent vegetation.

Notes:

Sweet Marsh

Water levels: All wetlands are at or within 1ft of crest which is typical for this time of year

Vegetation: Abundant emergent and submergent vegetation.

Notes:

BUTLER COUNTY

Big Marsh

Water levels: All wetlands are at or within 1ft of crest which is typical for this time of year.

Vegetation: Abundant emergent and submergent vegetation.

Notes: Work is complete on 260th Street east of Jay Ave. The dike repair work still is being done at this time.

CLEAR LAKE WILDLIFE UNIT

TJ Herrick, Wildlife Biologist

Updated: 10/16/19

CERRO GORDO COUNTY

Union Hills

Water levels: Large wetland with boat ramp is being held low to revegetate. Remaining wetlands are at crest

Vegetation: Most wetlands have abundant emergent and submergent vegetation

Notes:

Ventura Marsh

Water Level: 1' above crest.

Vegetation: Abundant emergent and submergent vegetation

Notes: Cattail mats have become dislodged and are floating on the marsh due to high water. The boat ramp is being impacted by this severely. Currently the boat ramp is mostly blocked. Boats are still being launched at the ramp, however it is very difficult.

HANCOCK COUNTY

Crystal Hills WPA

Water levels: At crest.

Vegetation: Very little emergent vegetation, abundant submergent vegetation

Notes:

Gladfelter WMA

Water levels: At crest

Vegetation: Some emergent and submergent vegetation

Notes:

Eagle Lake

Water Level: 0.3' above crest

Vegetation: Abundant emergent and submergent vegetation

Notes:

East Twin Lake WMA

Water Level: At crest

Vegetation: Abundant emergent and submergent vegetation

Notes:

Meredith Marsh

Water levels: Water level is more than 1.5' below crest. Infrastructure problems are causing this wetland to be below crest.

Vegetation: Abundant emergent and submergent vegetation

Notes:

WINNEBAGO COUNTY

Harmon Lake

Water levels: At crest - large wetland with boat ramp. East wetland is low due to infrastructure problems

Vegetation: Abundant emergent and submergent vegetation

Notes:

Myre Slough

Water level: 0.3' below crest.

Vegetation: Abundant emergent and submergent vegetation

Notes: Vandalism earlier in the summer caused this marsh to be lower than anticipated.

WORTH COUNTY

Elk Creek - Pool A

Water level: At crest

Vegetation: Little emergent and submergent vegetation

Notes:

Elk Creek - Pool B

Water level: At crest

Vegetation: Abundant emergent and submergent vegetation

Notes:

Elk Creek - Pool C

Water level: At crest

Vegetation: Abundant emergent and submergent vegetation

Notes:

Rice Lake

Water Level: At crest

Vegetation: Abundant submergent vegetation and some emergent vegetation

Notes:

Hanlontown Slough

Water level: At crest

Vegetation: Abundant emergent and submergent vegetation

Notes: Boat access is becoming difficult due to siltation of boat channel

Silver Lake and Marsh

Water level: At crest

Vegetation: Little emergent and submergent vegetation in the main lake. Marsh is highly vegetated

Notes:

WRIGHT COUNTY

Big Wall Lake

Water Level: 0.3' below crest

Vegetation: Abundant emergent and submergent vegetation

Notes: Wild rice is EXTREMELY robust this year. Scouting prior to hunting is highly encouraged. Navigation and downed game retrieval will be more difficult than years past.

Elm Lake

Water levels: 0.2' above crest

Vegetation: Little emergent and submergent vegetation

Notes:

Lower Morse Lake Wetland Complex

Water levels: Most wetlands are at Crest.

Vegetation: Abundant emergent and submergent vegetation
Notes: Morse Lake is currently 4.0' below crest

GRAND RIVER WILDLIFE UNIT

Chad Paup, Wildlife Biologist
Updated: 10/01/19

ADAMS COUNTY

Lake Icaria

Water levels: Very good
Vegetation: Good
Notes: Good walk in area.

UNION COUNTY

Mitchell Marsh

Water levels: Full
Vegetation: Very good
Notes: Boat or walk in

GREAT LAKES WILDLIFE UNIT

Chris LaRue, Wildlife Biologist
Updated: 10/15/19

DICKINSON COUNTY

Christopherson Slough

Water levels: Recent rains have the water levels at or above crest. Most large wetlands have good water for walk-in hunting opportunities.
Vegetation: Vegetation is good in most large marshes and fair within main Slough for waterfowl habitat.
Notes: Boat access is good on the Slough for large and small outboard motors.

Diamond Lake

Water levels: Diamond Lake was fairly low and in a partial drawdown until recent rains increased the lake level once again. Most large and small wetlands have good water for walk-in hunting opportunities.
Vegetation: Vegetation is good in most areas with a large amount of sub-emergent vegetation in the main lake. Flooding in 2018 and early 2019 have reduced shoreline cattails on the lake.
Notes: Diamond Lake has enough water for small and large boats. However, outboard motors may struggle with the extensive sub-emergent vegetation. The lake will probably remain in

drawdown conditions again in 2020 to remove rough fish and to improve aquatic vegetation as possible.

Dugout Creek

Water levels: Recent rains have Dugout Creek at crest elevation. Most large and small wetlands have good water for walk-in hunting opportunities.

Vegetation: The main marsh after 2018 & early 2019 flooding is in fair condition with pockets of good vegetation / waterfowl habitat. Most all wetlands have good vegetation at this time.

Notes: There is good water for large and small boats with outboard motors. Spring of 2020 the main marsh will be under drawdown once again to improve aquatic vegetation and waterfowl habitat.

Garlock Slough

Water levels: Garlock Slough is at crest elevation with West Lake Okoboji. Most large and small wetland have good water for walk-in hunting opportunities.

Vegetation: Vegetation is good on the main Slough and in most wetlands after the 2019 growing season.

Notes: Garlock does not have a boat access but is accessible by canoe or kayak and walk-in shoreline hunting away from occupied buildings.

Grovers Lake

Water levels: Groves Lake is above crest level with the recent rains.

Vegetation: Emergent and Submergent vegetation appear in good condition. The past few years of high water and rat activity have opened up a few smaller pockets which have been attractive to waterfowl if they can be reached.

Notes: Grovers is accessible by large and small boats with outboard motors.

Hales Slough

Water levels: The water levels are at crest level with Spirit Lake. Some of the large wetlands in the complex to the east have good water for walk-in hunting opportunities as well.

Vegetation: Vegetation is in good condition on the main slough.

Notes: Hales Slough is accessible by large and small boats with outboard motors.

Horseshoe Lake WMA

Water levels: The lake is at normal crest levels after the recent rains and accessible by large and small boats with outboard motors.

Vegetation: The area has good emergent and submergent vegetation in the main marsh.

Notes: **Horseshoe Lake is OUTSIDE the Jemmerson Slough Waterfowl Refuge and therefore IS OPEN to public hunting.**

Jemmerson Slough

Water levels: Most all of Jemmerson Slough is at crest levels.

Vegetation: Vegetation is good but long term high water has began to open up some areas.

Notes: **The pools with boat access are inside the WATERFOWL REFUGE and therefore Closed To Hunting. The Jemmerson Slough Wetlands Complex is about 1,100 acres in size.**

About 665 acres is in the Waterfowl Refuge this was established in 2009. The refuge is closed to all public hunting access when the duck season is open. There are some wetlands outside the refuge that can provide good walk-in hunting opportunities when water conditions allow.

Kettleon-Hogsback Complex

Water levels: The water level is above crest with Spirit Lake.

Vegetation: Vegetation is good and water quality has been good.

Notes: Boat access is good for large and small boats and outboard motors.

Little Swan Lake

Water levels: The lake level is down as the Department works to improve vegetation and to remove rough fish.

Vegetation: Vegetation is fairly poor

Notes: The area is accessible by small boats on the main lake but the West Bay may be walk-in only.

Sidel Marsh

Water levels: Slightly above crest level

Vegetation: Vegetation is good

Notes: Good walk-in hunting opportunity

Spring Run

Water levels: Most all large and small wetlands have good water at this time.

Vegetation: Vegetation is very good in most of the complex

Notes: Boat access is good on all the large marshes and shallow lakes in the complex. The entire complex has excellent walk-in hunting opportunities due the good water conditions.

Welch Lake Complex

Water levels: Most all wetlands are near or at crest levels due to recent rains.

Vegetation: Vegetation is good on most all the wetlands

Notes: Welch Lake is an excellent area for walk-in hunting opportunities.

Yager Slough

Water levels: Yager Slough is at crest level due to recent rains.

Vegetation: Vegetation is fair to marginal due to high water levels for the last couple years.

Notes: Yager provides excellent walk-in hunting opportunities.

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Rush Lake

Water levels: Rush lake is at or just above crest level due to recent rains.

Vegetation: Vegetation is fair to marginal due to high water levels for the last couple years.

Notes: Boat access should be good for large and small outboard motors. Vegetation was recently cleared where it could be reached.

IOWA RIVER WILDLIFE UNIT

Steve Woodruff, Wildlife Biologist

Updated: 10/23/19

BENTON COUNTY

Dudgeon Lake

Water levels: Cedar River is within its banks. Oxbows have good water. Wetland with water control structure vandalized. Water level lost, but in the process of re-filling

Vegetation: Vegetation is marginal due to late spring high water events.

Notes: Pre-scouting is advised.

JOHNSON COUNTY

Hawkeye Wildlife Area

Water levels: Water level is approximately 685.8 msl.

Vegetation: Excellent vegetation. Millet was aerial applied on several locations.

Notes: Repairs being completed on water control gates at the Coralville Dam.

Boat accesses are limited due to muddy conditions. Be very cautious if entering. Pre-scouting advised.

Swan Lake

Water levels: At Crest

Vegetation: Marginal vegetation along the perimeter of the lake.

Notes:

TAMA COUNTY

Otter Creek

Water levels: All segments are at crest.

Vegetation: Excellent vegetation and food source for waterfowl.

Notes: Barn Road is open. Pre-scouting advised

MAQUOKETA WILDLIFE UNIT

Curt Kemmerer, Wildlife Biologist

Updated: 10/17/19

CLINTON COUNTY

Goose Lake

Water levels: North Pool: At crest.

Center Pool: At crest.

South Pool: At crest.

Vegetation: North Pool: Typical of last several years. Hard cattail fringe with heavy lily pads and pickerelweed across the open area.

Center Pool: Typical of last several years. Hard cattail fringe with heavy lily pads and pickerelweed across the open area.

South Pool: Solid vegetation except along ditches/south dike.

Notes: Boat access is normal this year. Shallow water rigs should be okay.

JACKSON COUNTY

Green Island

Water levels: Well above crest on both sides.

Vegetation: The area is very open this year. Timber continues to die back.

Notes: Major flooding this year across the entire area. 3rd year in a row of season-long flooding. Negative impacts to food and cover are evident. Pumping is not necessary with the high water.

JONES COUNTY

Muskrat Slough

Water levels: At crest.

Vegetation: Typical hard cattail fringe with little to no vegetation across the open water.

Notes:

SCOTT COUNTY

Princeton

Water levels: Above crest.

Vegetation: Typical of recent years. Thick lotus and arrowhead across most of the open water area.

Notes: Boat access conditions should be easy for all types with the high water.. Pumping is not necessary this year with the high river levels.

MISSOURI RIVER WILDLIFE UNIT

Doug Chafa, Wildlife Biologist

Updated:

HARRISON COUNTY

Round Lake

Water levels:

Vegetation:

Notes:

Nobles Lake

Water levels:

Vegetation:

Notes:

Tyson Bend

Water levels:

Vegetation:

Notes:

Soldier Bend

Water levels:

Vegetation:

Notes:

California Bend

Water levels:

Vegetation:

Notes:

MONONA COUNTY

Badger Lake

Water levels:

Vegetation:

Notes:

Louisville Bend

Water levels:

Vegetation:

Notes:

Tieville Bend

Water levels:

Vegetation:

Notes:

WOODBURY COUNTY

Browns Lake

Water levels:

Vegetation:

Notes:

[Luton WMA](#)

Water levels:

Vegetation:

Notes:

[Snyder Bend WMA](#)

Water levels:

Vegetation:

Notes:

[Winnebago Bend WMA](#)

Water levels:

Vegetation:

Notes:

[Table Marsh WMA](#)

Water levels:

Vegetation:

Notes:

Nishnabotna Wildlife Unit

Matt Dollison, Wildlife Biologist

Updated: Oct. 3, 2019

Fremont County

[Riverton – Main Area](#)

Water levels: The entire main marsh is at or above normal full pool.

Vegetation: Much of the entire marsh, except the north end of the main boat area, have a good amount of valuable annual vegetation that should provide ample food for ducks.

Notes: The main boat ramp is currently accessible.

[Riverton – Jensen Tract](#)

Water levels: The Jensen Tract south of town is >2 feet over normal full pool due to flood water that entered through a previous levee blowout.

Vegetation: The entire Jensen Tract was loaded with valuable annual vegetation, however some of it has been overtopped by flood water and may be less accessible for ducks than it otherwise would have been.

Notes: The boat ramp and walk-in parking lot are both not currently accessible due to flood water.

[Forney Lake](#)

Water levels: Very deep. Much of the marsh will be too deep for the use of chest waders.

Vegetation: There is some vegetation present, but the marsh is very open compared to normal. There is limited concealment vegetation.

Notes: The boat ramp was still accessible from Bluff Road to the east on Oct. 3rd.

Copeland Bend

Water levels: Very high. Most of the entire WMA is covered by Missouri River flood water.

Vegetation: Limited herbaceous vegetation present. Existing woody cover could provide some concealment in some areas.

Notes: Very little access currently. Around Hwy 2 and old Hwy 2 is about the only place where you can access the levee.

M. U. Payne (Formerly Frazer's Bend)

Water levels: Very high. Completely covered by Missouri River flood water.

Vegetation: Very limited/unknown.

Notes: No public access by road currently.

Cooper Creek

Water levels: Good water level due to recent rainfall.

Vegetation: Mostly perennial non-food producing veg

Notes:

Auldon Bar

Water levels: Very high. Completely covered by Missouri River flood water.

Vegetation: Unknown.

Notes: No public access by road currently.

Botna Bottoms:

Water levels: All wetland cells are full. Ideal water levels over much of the WMA.

Vegetation: The Deng Tract to the east is loaded with valuable annual food producing vegetation. The Williams Tract wetland is mostly open water.

Notes:

Draper Bottoms

Water levels: Very high. Completely covered by Missouri River flood water.

Vegetation: Unknown.

Notes: At last check, no public access by road.

Mills County

Willow Slough

Water levels: At full pool.

Vegetation: Mostly perennial non-food producing vegetation. American lotus is dying back due to colder weather.

Notes:

Haynie Slough

Water levels: Above normal full pool.

Vegetation: Mostly perennial non-food producing vegetation.

Notes: More open water than in a typical year. Road on south side may be unusable after rain events.

Noddleman Island

Water levels: Very high. Most of the entire WMA is covered by Missouri River flood water.

Vegetation: Limited herbaceous vegetation present. Existing woody cover could provide some concealment in some areas.

Notes: At last check, was accessible only from the road to the north. Rising MO River levels may cut off access.

St. Mary's Island

Water levels: Much more/deeper water than typical due to flooding.

Vegetation: Scattered herbaceous and woody vegetation should provide some concealment. Limited annual food producing vegetation present.

Notes:

ODESSA WILDLIFE UNIT

Andy Robbins, Wildlife Biologist

Updated: 10/16/19

DES MOINES COUNTY

Blackhawk Bottoms

Water levels: Above normal due to flooding from the Mississippi River.

Vegetation: Less than normal due to major flooding during the growing season.

Notes:

LOUISA COUNTY

Cone Marsh

Water levels: Crest

Vegetation: Dense emergent and submergent vegetation.

Notes: Heavy frost should help defoliate the lotus, arrowhead, and pickerelweed beds creating more areas of open water as the season progresses.

Klum Lake

Water levels: Crest

Vegetation: Dense emergent and submergent vegetation.

Notes: Aerial spraying over the past few seasons has controlled much of the dense cattail stands, creating more areas of open water and more diverse wetland vegetation.

Odessa Wildlife Area

Water levels: Currently above normal fall crest and rising.

<https://water.weather.gov/ahps2/hydrograph.php?wfo=dvn&gage=odsi4>

Vegetation: Almost none, due to prolonged high water during the growing season.

Notes: The Mississippi River is currently 6+ feet higher than the Odessa water level. This causes seepage through the ground and levees that will continue to raise the Odessa level for the near future.

MUSCATINE COUNTY

Wiese Slough

Water levels: Crest

Vegetation: Dense emergent and submergent vegetation.

Notes:

PRAIRIE LAKES WILDLIFE UNIT

Rob Patterson Wildlife Biologist

Updated: 10/2/19

CLAY COUNTY

Barringer Slough

Water levels: Water levels are at crest elevation

Vegetation: Quality stands of emergent and submergent vegetation exist across the entire slough.

Notes:

Dan Green Slough

Water levels: Water levels are at crest elevation

Vegetation: Dan Greene slough has pockets of emergent vegetation with large stands of submergent vegetation. High water over the last several years has greatly reduced the emergent vegetation.

Notes:

[DU Marsh](#)

Water levels: DU marsh will be in a managed draw-down through the fall and winter of 2019-2020 with plans to refill in summer 2020. Shallow sheet water will likely be available that may offer some walk in opportunities. Scouting is highly encouraged.

Vegetation: Quality emergent vegetation exists throughout DU marsh.

Notes:

[Trumbull Lake-Smith Slough Complex](#)

Water levels: Trumbull Lake and Smith Slough are at crest elevation.

Vegetation: Trumbull Lake has a fringe of emergent vegetation with large stands of submergent vegetation. Smith Slough has quality stands of emergent and submergent vegetation over the entire marsh.

Notes: Scouting is highly encouraged on Smith Slough, floating cattail masses can create boat access issues. The small wetland basins within the complex provide quality walk in opportunities.

EMMET COUNTY

[Cheever Lake](#)

Water levels: Water levels are at crest elevation

Vegetation: Good stands of emergent vegetation can be found across the entire lake. The open water areas of the lake support quality stands of submergent vegetation.

Notes: Floating clumps of cattails can at times block the boat access to this lake, making access more difficult for larger boats. Scouting is encouraged prior hunting this lake.

[Four-Mile Lake Complex](#)

Water levels: Water levels are at crest elevation

Vegetation: Quality stands of submergent and emergent vegetation exist across the main lake as well as in the larger wetland basins within this complex.

Notes: The boat access on the north end of the lake is the best way to access area. Floating cattail clumps can block this access at times. Scouting this area prior to hunting is encouraged. The larger wetland basins on this complex provide quality walk in opportunities.

[Ingham-High Complex](#)

Water levels: Water levels are at crest elevation.

Vegetation: Most of the large marshes and wetland basins contain quality stands of emergent vegetation. Due to high water over the last couple years some areas have less vegetation but quality cover still exists.

Notes:

[Iowa Lake-Goose Lake Complex](#)

Water levels: Water levels are at crest elevation

Vegetation: Most wetland basins in this complex have quality stands of emergent and submergent vegetation. Goose Lake has a fringe of emergent vegetation with pockets of submergent vegetation.

Notes:

Tuttle Lake Complex

Water levels: Water levels are at crest elevation

Vegetation: The marshes and wetlands within this complex have quality stands of emergent and submergent vegetation and will provide quality walk in opportunities. Tuttle Lake itself is primarily an open water system.

PALO ALTO COUNTY

Blue-wing Marsh

Water levels: Blue wing marsh will be in a managed draw-down through the fall and winter 2019-2020 with plans to refill in summer 2020. Shallow sheet water will likely be available that may offer some walk in opportunities. Scouting is highly encouraged.

Vegetation: Quality stands of emergent vegetation exist throughout blue wing marsh.

Notes: Small wetland basins on this complex provide some walk in opportunities.

Dewey's Pasture Complex

Water levels: Most lakes, marshes and wetlands are at crest elevation. Several large marshes provide quality boat access and many wetland basins provide quality walk in opportunities. Virgin Lake and Elk Lake are at crest elevation.

Vegetation: Quality emergent and submergent vegetation exist in most water bodies within this complex. Virgin Lake has quality emergent vegetation in the bays and a fringe around the perimeter of the lake.

Notes:

Fallow Marsh

Water levels: Water levels are at crest elevation excluding one large wetland basin on a satellite tract which recently experienced some infrastructure upgrades.

Vegetation: Emergent vegetation is present on all water bodies.

Notes:

Rush Lake

Water levels: Rush Lake will be in a managed draw-down through the fall and winter 2019-2020 with plans to refill in summer 2020. Shallow sheet water will likely be available that may offer some walk in opportunities. Scouting is highly encouraged.

Vegetation: Quality emergent vegetation exists on Rush Lake.

Notes:

RATHBUN WILDLIFE UNIT

Heath Van Waus, Wildlife Technician II

APPANOOSE COUNTY

Rathbun Lake Complex

Water levels: Water levels are at or above crest elevation

Vegetation: Quality amounts of emergent vegetation are present on the majority on the wetlands around Rathbun Lake. Open water is present on browns slough and goodwater marsh because high water this spring did not allow for proper draw downs. Emergent vegetation in the upper ends of these impoundments.

Notes:

Sedan Bottoms

Water levels: Water levels are at or above crest elevation

Vegetation: Quality emergent vegetation is present in both the refuge and huntable portions of Sedan Bottoms. Water levels will need to come down slightly to provide the best habitat for waterfowl and opportunities for hunters.

Notes: Sedan Bottoms WMA is walk in only.

RED ROCK WILDLIFE UNIT

Todd Gosselink, Wildlife Biologist

Updated: 10/23/19

JASPER & POLK COUNTIES

Colfax WMA and Chichaqua Bottoms Green Belt WMA

Water levels: Recent heavy rains in early October have fully saturated the oxbows, ponds and wetlands with higher river flows due to recent rains. If river levels remain high, most of the wetland will remain full.

Vegetation: Vegetation in most areas are good. Flooding was earlier in the year, but dried up by mid summer allowing for good vegetation growth. With recent heavy rains, much of the low areas with vegetation are flooded again.

Notes: Because these wetlands are on the river floodplain and in close proximity to the river channel, they are often underlain by porous soils and water levels are dependent upon the river water level, which is currently high.

Rock Creek Marsh

Water levels: The water level is determined by the elevation of Rock Creek Lake, which is currently at crest.

Vegetation: There has been extremely heavy sedimentation the last few years resulting in reduced water surface area. The main marsh has some open water conditions, but dense willows and arrowhead plants fill much of the marsh. Some of the basins that have been isolated by sedimentation have good stands of emergent vegetation, primarily arrowhead.

Notes: Boat access is from the State Park boat ramps. Once north of the bridge, medium and larger boats with outboard motors will have difficulty because of silt deposition.

MARION COUNTY

Red Rock Reservoir

Water levels: Recent heavy rains upstream of Lake Red Rock is projected to increase lake levels to 749 as of today's report (10/23). This is 7 feet above normal pool of 742. It is projected to be back down 744 by end of October, which is the target elevation for waterfowl management this time of year. The DNR has requested that the USACE maintain the lake level to 744 once the lake recedes in November, which is the maximum pool level raise allowed for 2019. Due to the potential for fluctuating lake levels, it is crucial to monitor the lake water level and river flows at the USACE web site:

<http://rivergages.mvr.usace.army.mil/WaterControl/Districts/MVR/Forecast/pelforecast.html>

Vegetation: The vegetation and food for migrating waterfowl was excellent headed into the fall, since the high lake levels early summer were down by the middle of July, allowing for natural vegetation to grow and produce seeds. In addition, 450 acres of Japanese millet and buckwheat was flown on beginning of August. It was planted near Box Cars boat ramp, and in the Whitebreast Creek arm of Red Rock, east and west of HWY 14. However, the lake pool increase of 753 last week with heavy river flows likely reduced the quality of the millet and natural vegetation.

Boat Access: The boat ramp at "OK Hill"(east of Swan on 41st Ave) is not accessible above lake elevation 746, which it is currently above. At lake pools below 744, it is usable for very shallow draft boats and launching those may be questionable. The "Box Cars" and boat ramp is accessible up to elevation 749, so this boat ramp is now accessible again. Bennington boat ramp is accessible up to elevation 752, so it also accessible now. A new boat ramp was constructed this summer on Dubuque Street, just east across the bay from the old town of Dunreath. This boat ramp is a shallow boat ramp, usable from elevation 744 to 751. It will give access to the delta area of Box Cars, but will have to cross the open waters of the lake.

Notes: The high and increasing water levels of the lake will provide excellent food for migrating waterfowl as the lake is going up and flooding new habitat, but will spread birds out over the area making it more difficult to hunt.

Swan Refuge

Water levels: The refuge is full due to recent flooding, with water overtopping the levee. Pumping was planned this fall as needed to maintain water in the refuge, but recent flooding filled the refuge.

Vegetation: There is good natural moist soil plants in the refuge, since the summer flooding was down by July giving enough time for vegetation to grow and produce seed for migrating waterfowl.

Boat Access: There are no boat accesses in this area.

Notes: This is an Inviolate Waterfowl Refuge. Access is restricted from 1 September until the end of the duck hunting season.

WARREN COUNTY

Banner Flats WMA

Water levels: The wetlands in this area are oxbows or constructed basins and currently are full of water due to recent heavy rains. Water levels will vary depending upon the weather and the proximity of the wetland to the river channel, which is currently at normal levels.

Vegetation: Good stands of moist soil and emergent plants have developed during July and August, after the summer flooding receded.

Notes: These are walk-in areas.

Red Rock WMA South River Hartford Bottoms

Water levels: There are numerous oxbows and constructed wetlands in this area. Most wetlands are currently full of water due to recent rains.

Vegetation: Good stands of moist soil and emergent plants have developed during July and August, after the summer flooding receded.

Notes:

Red Rock WMA Sub-impoundments Little Hartford and Big Hartford (Richard's Marsh)

Water levels: Little Hartford wetland has excellent water levels due to above average river conditions, with the river backing up into the marsh. Big Hartford (Richard's Marsh) is full due to recent flooding. Current construction plans on Big Hartford has the marsh to be drained this fall to conduct the work, but heavy rains have currently filled the marsh, and we may be able to hold water in Big Hartford until construction would begin, if it begins with wet condition this fall.

Vegetation: There is decent moist soil plant growth in Big and Little Hartford since flood waters receded in July this past year. No agricultural crops were planted this spring in the marsh due to flood conditions.

Boat Access: The boat ramp at Little Hartford is accessible to lake elevation 762, but the access road is currently being worked on, so access may be difficult. Big Hartford boat ramps are accessible to lake elevation 758, but if river flows get above 30,000 cfs, it causes the river to go out of banks and flood the access roads to the ramps.

Runnells Marsh

Water levels: The Runnells Marsh (directly south of the town of Runnells) is currently over full due to heavy river flows. The water will recede as the river levels decreases, and we will level maintain the water level for a full marsh through the waterfowl season.

Vegetation: There is great moist soil plant growth throughout much of the Runnells Marsh, but the Des Moines River flooding is currently flowing through the marsh since it is out of its banks, deteriorating vegetation quality, but still should still be a good resource for migrating waterfowl.

Boat Access: The boats ramps at Runnells Marsh are accessible to lake elevation 755,

Notes: This marsh is an excellent walk-in site also, with access from HWY 316 and the boat ramp. The southwest portion of the marsh can be accessed by crossing the dike and water control outflow structure on the south side of the marsh.

SAYLORVILLE WILDLIFE UNIT

Josh Gansen, Wildlife Biologist.

Updated: 10/9/19

GREENE COUNTY

Dunbar Slough WMA – Main Wetland

Water levels: 3 inches below Fall Crest

Vegetation: Nice stand of Emergent vegetation across the area

Notes:

Dunbar Slough WPA

Water levels: 6 inches below Fall Crest

Vegetation: Stands of Annuals and Emergent vegetation across the area

Notes: Segment B now has boat access

Goose Lake WMA

Water levels: Crest

Vegetation: Large areas of open water with submergent vegetation

Notes:

Snake Creek WMA

Water levels: Crest

Vegetation: Nice stand of Emergent vegetation across the area

Notes:

GUTHRIE COUNTY

Bays Branch WMA

Water levels: 1 foot below Fall Crest

Vegetation: Nice stand of Emergent vegetation across the area

Notes:

Lakin Slough

Water levels: Crest

Vegetation: Large areas of open water with submergent vegetation

Notes:

McCord Pond

Water levels: 6" below Crest

Vegetation: Nice stand of Emergent vegetation across the area

Notes:

POLK COUNTY

Saylorville Reservoir

Water levels: Currently 840.5 3 feet higher than optimal

Vegetation: Annuals will be covered in 2 feet of water

Notes: Current flooding will destroy vegetation and make hiding a boat difficult this fall

STORY COUNTY

Hendrickson Marsh

Water levels: 1 foot below crest

Vegetation: Nice stand of Emergent vegetation across the area

Notes:

SUGEMA WILDLIFE UNIT

Jeff Glaw, Wildlife Biologist

Updated: 10/1/19

KEOKUK COUNTY

Hayesville Bend WMA

Water levels: Variable. Water levels fluctuate with the levels of the South Skunk River.

Vegetation: Very little vegetation due to flood conditions earlier in the year.

Notes: Fair amount of damage on dike in several areas due to earlier flooding.

VAN BUREN COUNTY

Lake Sugema

Water levels: Currently at crest.

Vegetation: Very little aquatic vegetation due to high water levels earlier in the spring and summer.

Notes: Lake is currently being drawn down by 2 feet to facilitate work to be done by fisheries staff.

DeVoss/Foster WMA

Water levels: Currently at crest.

Vegetation: Fair amount of desired vegetation for waterfowl.

Notes: Received 5 inches of rain this past weekend in the Lake Sugema area.

Fox River WMA

Water levels: Both segments are at crest.

Vegetation: Plenty of smartweed and other desirable vegetation this year.

Notes: Plenty of water and open areas to hunt waterfowl.

UPPER IOWA WILDLIFE UNIT

Vacant, Wildlife Biologist

Updated: 10/4/2019

ALLAMAKEE

Mississippi River – Pool 9

Water levels: High, water levels are nearly 3 feet higher than normal pool and climbing

Vegetation: Poor, due to all of the summertime flooding

Notes: The New Albin landing (Army Rd) is closed due to the high water conditions

CLAYTON COUNTY

Mississippi River – Pool 10

Water levels: High, water levels are nearing flood stage and climbing.

Vegetation: Poor, due to all of the summertime flooding

Notes:

WINNESHIEK COUNTY

Cardinal Marsh

Water levels: The main marsh and all four segments have excellent water levels for waterfowl hunting.

Vegetation: The main marsh has a lot of open water with cattail edges and islands scattered throughout and submergent vegetation.

Segments A,B and D have a 50/50 mix of aquatic vegetation (both submergent and emergent) and open water, while C is mainly open water with some submergent vegetation.

Notes: The main marsh has a cement boat ramp while the segments are walk-in or only small “layout” type boat access (no boat ramp).
