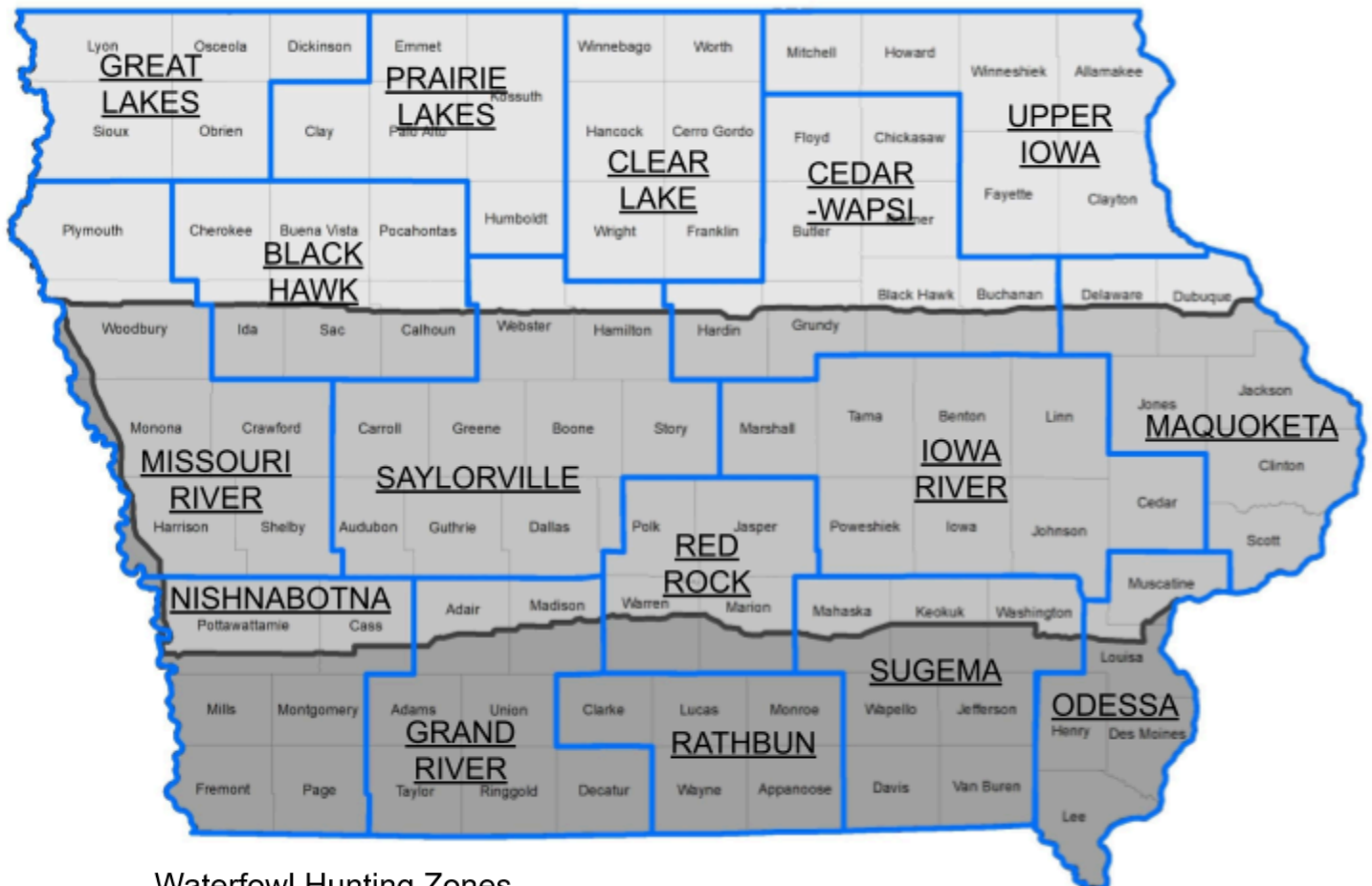


Wetland Habitat Conditions – Fall 2024

Updated: Some South Zone Areas Updated 10/10/24



Waterfowl Hunting Zones

North
 Central
 South
 DNR Wildlife Units

DNR Public Hunting Atlas:

<https://iowadnr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f9161b90cddb4fcfb35a96901882a4b7/>

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 pondweed, curly leaf 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.
- 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.

BLACK HAWK WILDLIFE UNIT

Wildlife Biologist: Clint Maddix

Date Updated: 9/25/2024

BUENA VISTA COUNTY

Little Storm Lake

Water Level: 6" - 8" below crest elevation.

Vegetation: Heavy submergent and emergent vegetation.

Notes: The boat ramp is usable. There is a heavy band of emergents to get through before reaching open water.

Storm Lake

Water Level: 6" - 8" below crest elevation.

Vegetation: Very little vegetation is present in the lake.

Notes: All boat ramps should be usable.

CALHOUN COUNTY

South Twin Lake

Water Level: As of the moment, the lake is dry. Sheet water could exist this Fall, if heavy rains were to occur.

Vegetation: There is a dense stand of emergent vegetation around the shoreline.

Notes: Not accessible by boats. Walk-in hunting would be extremely difficult and is not recommended.

CARROLL COUNTY

Artesian Lake

Water Level: Approximately 1 foot above managed crest elevation.

Vegetation: Emergent vegetation is relatively sparse, some submergent vegetation.

Notes: Vegetation has diminished considerably as a result of high water. Wader hunting may be difficult in some areas.

POCAHONTAS COUNTY

Little Clear Lake

Water Level: Approximately 8 inches below crest elevation.

Vegetation: The lake has a nice band of emergent vegetation closer to shore. Substantial submergent vegetation exists throughout the majority of the open water areas.

Notes: The lake has two access points for boats: a gravel ramp on the NE side and a new concrete ramp on the SW side. The amount of submergent veg. may make boating difficult.

Lizard Lake

Water Level: Water is between 6" and 1' low.

Vegetation: The lake is around half emergent vegetation with open water in the middle. Heavy submergents exist in some of the open water areas.

Notes: The concrete ramp on the east side should be accessible for all boats. The primitive launches on the east and west are only suitable for small craft that you can drag.

Shimon Marsh

Water Level: The main marsh is approximately 6" below crest. Other small wetlands have dried up.

Vegetation: Main wetland is very dense with emergent vegetation.

Notes: The ramp on the south side is suitable for small boats. The area is open to non-motorized vessels only.

Sunken Grove

Water Level: The main wetland is at or near crest.

Vegetation: Main wetland has some emergent vegetation and significant open water.

Notes: The main ramp is accessible to boats.

SAC COUNTY

Black Hawk Wildlife Area

Water Level: DU Marsh is at 4" below crest elevation, State Marsh is in complete drawdown but does still have water in some small areas. Smaller wetlands have varying degrees of water.

Vegetation: Heavy vegetation is present in most marshes.

Notes: State Marsh does not have water to launch a boat. DU Marsh is walk-in only.

Black Hawk Lake

Water Level: Black Hawk Lake and the Inlet are at crest elevation.

Vegetation: The main lake has very little vegetation. The Inlet has a great perimeter of emergent veg. and open water in the middle.

Notes: All ramps should be usable.

Burrow's Pond

Water Level: The main wetland is at or near crest. Smaller wetlands have variable water levels.

Vegetation: All wetlands have a significant amount of emergent vegetation.

Notes: Boat ramp is accessible to smaller boats.

Kiowa Marsh

Water Level: Most of the larger wetlands on the complex are at or near crest elevation. The smaller wetlands are very low or dry.

Vegetation: Most wetlands have fairly heavy vegetation but all have some open water.

Notes: All boat ramps should be accessible to smaller boats.

Sac City Wetland Complex

Water Level: The wetlands on this area are very low or dry.

Vegetation: Very heavy emergent vegetation growth.

Notes: Some smaller wetlands are dry. The larger wetlands might have some water but access and hunting will be extremely difficult.

Tomahawk Marsh

Water Level: Water levels on this area are over 1' low.

Vegetation: Emergent vegetation is very heavy on the entire area.

Notes: Smaller wetlands are near dry. Access to open water areas for hunting will be difficult.

CEDAR-WAPSI WILDLIFE UNIT

Wildlife Biologists: Jason Auel and Justin Clark

Date Updated: _9/_26_/2024

BREMER COUNTY

Leopold Area

Water Level: All wetlands are less than half full.

Vegetation: Significant amount of emergent vegetation.

Notes: The boards are in to catch any water. The wetlands are half full or less and will continue to drop without significant rainfall. Scouting prior to hunting is strongly suggested.

Sweet Marsh

Water Level: All main segments are within 1 foot of crest which is similar to previous years for this time of year. The east segments are dry.

Vegetation: Significant amount of emergent vegetation.

Notes: The water levels in the main segments are currently holding steady. It will be difficult to increase water levels or to get water in the east walk-in segments without significant rainfall. Scouting prior to hunting is recommended.

The project on Martens Lake is now complete and water is within 1 foot of crest. The vegetation in Martens is 6 feet tall or taller in most of the marsh. This will make travel outside of the channels difficult even with mud motors. Be aware you will not be able to cross channels in chest waders.

The significant rainfall we had this spring flooded out most of our food plots within the segments. Millets were planted later in the year and are starting to seed.

BUTLER COUNTY

Big Marsh

Water Level: The three main pools of Big Marsh have good water depth for this time of year, and it is expected to continue to improve. Sub impoundments and areas north of the main marsh are dry. Most adjacent shallow wetlands on the complex have low water, but scouting those is highly recommended.

Vegetation: Vegetation is dense throughout

Notes: Water levels will continue to rise in September/ October for Big Marsh



CLEAR LAKE WILDLIFE UNIT

Wildlife Biologist: Rob Patterson

Date Updated: 09/26/2024

CERRO GORDO COUNTY

Union Hills

Water Level: Below Crest

Vegetation: Quality wetland habitat conditions are present throughout the complex

Notes: Recent warm dry weather has caused water levels to decline but quality habitat still persists throughout most of the complex

Ventura Marsh

Water Level: Approx. 1 ft below crest

Vegetation: Abundant emergent and submergent vegetation through the marsh

Notes: Boat access cleaned on 8/29

HANCOCK COUNTY

Crystal Hills WMA

Water Level: Slightly below crest

Vegetation: Quality wetland habitat conditions are present throughout the complex

Notes: Recent warm dry weather has caused water levels to decline but quality habitat still persists throughout most of the complex

Gladfelter WMA

Water Level: Slightly below crest

Vegetation: Quality habitat conditions occur throughout the complex with diverse aquatic plants

Notes: Recent warm dry weather has caused water levels to decline but quality habitat still persists throughout most of the complex

Eagle Lake

Water Level: 3 inches below crest

Vegetation: Habitat conditions are good.

Notes:

East Twin Lake WMA

Water Level: At or near crest

Vegetation: Emergent aquatic plants are present in the shallower areas of the lake

Notes:

Meredith Marsh

Water Level: At or near crest

Vegetation: Emergent aquatic plants are present

Notes:

WINNEBAGO COUNTY

Harmon Lake

Water Level: Slightly below crest

Vegetation: Very high quality habitat with diverse aquatic plants

Notes: Recent warm dry weather has caused water levels to decline but quality habitat still persists throughout most of the complex

Myre Slough

Water Level: Near Crest

Vegetation: Very high quality habitat with diverse aquatic plants

Notes:

WORTH COUNTY

Elk Creek-Pool A

Water Level: Near fall crest

Vegetation: Little emergent aquatic vegetation some submergents

Notes:

Elk Creek-Pool B

Water Level: Near fall crest

Vegetation: Quality annual vegetation exists throughout the pool

Notes:

Elk Creek-Pool C

Water Level: Near fall crest

Vegetation: Some annual aquatic vegetation

Notes: Quality annual vegetation exists throughout the pool

Rice Lake

Water Level: At crest

Vegetation: Quality habitat conditions exist in portions of the lake

Notes:

Hanlontown Slough

Water Level: Below Crest

Vegetation: High quality habitat conditions. Diverse emergent and submergent plant growth

Notes: Recent warm dry weather has caused water levels to decline but quality habitat still persists throughout most of the complex. Quality boat and walkin opportunities exist throughout the complex

Silver Lake and Marsh

Water Level: Below Crest

Vegetation: Some emergent aquatic plants and abundant submergents

Notes: Quality boat and walkin opportunities exist throughout the complex

WRIGHT COUNTY

Big Wall Lake

Water Level: Below crest

Vegetation: Wild rice stands are dense throughout the wetland basin

Notes: Herbicide treatments were completed in July to promote hunting opportunities.

Elm Lake

Water Level: Below crest

Vegetation: Quality habitat conditions exist in portions of the lake

Notes:

Lower Morse Lake Wetland Complex

Water Level: Most wetlands are below crest. Morse lake is about 3 ft below crest

Vegetation: Wetland habitat conditions are quality throughout the majority of the complex

Notes: Recent warm dry weather has caused water levels to decline but quality habitat still persists throughout most of the complex

GRAND RIVER WILDLIFE UNIT

Wildlife Biologist: Chad Paup

Date Updated: 8/29/2024

ADAMS COUNTY

Lake Icaria

Water Level: Good

Vegetation: Not much vegetation as we left the boards in.

Notes:

UNION COUNTY

Mitchell Marsh

Water Level: Filling fast. Plan to be at full pool by September 1st.

Vegetation: Excellent

Notes:

GREAT LAKES WILDLIFE UNIT

Wildlife Biologist: Chris LaRue

Date Updated: 9/26/2024

DICKINSON COUNTY

Christopherson Slough

Water Level: The main marsh is just below crest elevation.

Vegetation: Good habitat conditions

Notes: The main slough can be accessed by large and small boats. Most large wetlands in the complex have some good water for walk-in hunting opportunities.

Diamond Lake

Water Level: Diamond Lake is near normal pool elevation

Vegetation: Excellent

Notes: The main lake can be accessed by large and small boats. Most large

wetlands in the complex have some good water for walk-in hunting opportunities.

Dugout Creek

Water Level: The main marsh is near pool elevation

Vegetation: Excellent habitat conditions after 2023 drawdown

Notes: The main slough can be accessed by large and small boats. Most large wetlands in the complex have some good water for walk-in hunting opportunities.

Garlock Slough

Water Level: Garlock Slough is the same elevation as West Lake Okoboji and normal water level at this time.

Vegetation: Good habitat conditions, however emergent vegetation is stressed from this 2024 flooding.

Notes: Garlock is only accessible by canoe, kayak, or walk-in hunting. Some of the larger wetlands in the complex have hunttable water for good walk-in hunting opportunities.

Grovers Lake

Water Level: Grovers Lake is near normal pool elevation

Vegetation: Good

Notes: Grovers is accessible by large and small boats and motors. Heavy cattails may still make it difficult to reach the smaller pools.

Hales Slough

Water Level: Water level is good and has the same elevation as Spirit Lake.

Vegetation: Good

Notes: The main slough can be accessed by large and small boats. Most large wetlands in the complex have some good water for walk-in hunting opportunities.

Horseshoe Lake WMA

Water Level: Just below normal pool elevation

Vegetation: Good to Excellent

Notes: Horseshoe Lake is accessible by large and small boats and motors.

Jemmerson Slough **Waterfowl Refuge**

Water Level: The main marshes are still above normal pool elevation due to the 2024 flooding.

Vegetation: Good

Notes: **The Jemmerson Slough Wetlands Complex is about +/- 1,100 acres in size. Please note that 665 acres are in the designated Waterfowl Refuge that was established in 2009. The refuge is **CLOSED** to all public access during the duck season.**

Kattleson-Hogsback Complex

Water Level: West Hottes land Marble Lake are just below normal pool elevation with Spirit Lake.

Vegetation: Good

Notes: West Hottes and Marble Lake can be accessed by large and small boats. Most large wetlands in the complex have some good water for walk-in hunting opportunities.

Little Swan Lake

Water Level: Little Swan Lake is at full pool elevation

Vegetation: Good to Excellent

Notes: The main lake can be accessed by large and small boats. Most large wetlands in the complex have some good water for walk-in hunting opportunities.

Sidel Marsh

Water Level: At normal pool elevation

Vegetation: Excellent

Notes: The marsh is mainly a walk-in hunting area.

Spring Run

Water Level: Most of the large wetlands have decent water levels.

Vegetation: Areas of excellent to good vegetation in the complex.

Notes: Lily Lake is just about 6 inches below crest elevation finally after the 2024 flooding. Heavy cattails due to the previous years of drought may make hunting difficult.
Please know Lily Lake will be under construction this fall to replace the old WCS and outlet.

Pleasant Lake and Prairie Lake are at normal crest elevations. Spring Lake is also at normal crest elevation and all lakes area accessible by small and large boats and mud motors.

Scouting is recommended in the complex where excellent walk-in hunting opportunities are available.

Welch Lake Complex

Water Level: Most all of the large and small wetlands have good water levels

Vegetation: Some wetlands have excellent vegetation with others that sustained degraded vegetation due to the 2024 flooding conditions.

Notes: The complex has excellent walk-in hunting opportunities and scouting is recommended if possible.

Yager Slough

Water Level: Yager slough is at or just below normal crest elevation.

Vegetation: Excellent

Notes: Some of the larger wetlands in the complex have good water and habitat conditions for walk-in hunting opportunities.

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Rush Lake

Water Level: Rush Lake is just below crest elevation

Vegetation: Areas of good to average vegetation after 2024 spring and summer flooding.

Notes: **IMPORTANT** - The boat channel was cleaned 9/26/24 to remove the sediment and vegetation at the very end to allow better access by large and small boats and motors.

IOWA RIVER WILDLIFE UNIT

Wildlife Biologist: Rod Ellingson

Date Updated: 9_/30_/2024

BENTON COUNTY

Dudgeon Lake

Water Level: Below crest by 2 feet

Vegetation: Little vegetation due to flooding

Notes:

JOHNSON COUNTY

Hawkeye Wildlife Area

Water Level: Main Lake 685.1' currently

Vegetation: Main lake has little veg due to flooding but the sub impoundments have excellent veg

Notes: Most sub impoundments have little to no water currently, scout in advance

Swan Lake

Water Level: dry

Vegetation: excellent veg

Notes:

TAMA COUNTY

Otter Creek

Water Level: Below Crest in all segments, with huntable water in segments 1, 4,6,and 7

Vegetation: Excellent vegetation in all segments with abundance of annuals

Notes: Currently running water into the marsh with Otter Creek. Small boats may be usable in 1 and 6

MAQUOKETA WILDLIFE UNIT

Wildlife Biologist: Nick McClimon

Date Updated: 10/3/2024

CLINTON COUNTY

Goose Lake

Water Level: North Pool: At crest.
Center Pool: At crest.
South Pool: 6 inches below crest.

Vegetation: All 3 pools are highly vegetated.

Notes: New boat ramp in the south pool is complete, access may be limited early due to vegetation.

JACKSON COUNTY

Green Island

Water Level: West Side:87.5
East Side:87.5

Vegetation: Vegetation is limited with the recent summer flooding.

Notes: Flooding this summer resulted in more damage to interior dikes resulting in the inability to pump water this fall. The current water levels are at normal fall depths. NO WAKE zones in the 4th and 5th ditch will be strictly enforced.

JONES COUNTY

Muskrat Slough

Water Level: 6 inches below crest.

Vegetation: Main pool is highly vegetated with emergent vegetation.

Notes:

SCOTT COUNTY

Princeton

Water Level: 575.0

Vegetation: Vegetation is limited due to summer flooding.

Notes:

MISSOURI RIVER WILDLIFE UNIT

Wildlife Biologist: Doug Chafa

Date Updated: 08/21/2024

HARRISON COUNTY

Round Lake

Water Level: 1.5 ft below crest. Lake has been coming up.

Vegetation: Good amount of emergent vegetation, mostly bulrush and cattails.

Notes: Boat channel recently cleaned out.

Nobles Lake

Water Level: 1 ft below crest. Lake is slowly recovering from drought.

Vegetation: Lots of emergent vegetation.

Notes: Levee construction project may impact scouting access this week, but construction company plans to be finished with access prior to Sept 1.

Tyson Bend

Water Level: River is at normal navigation flows, (34,800 cf/s). Stage at Blair is 14.97ft.

Vegetation: Open water

Notes: Blue-wings using backwater.

Soldier Bend

Water Level: River is at navigation flows.

Vegetation: Open water

Notes:

California Bend

Water Level: River is at navigation flows.

Vegetation:

Notes:

MONONA COUNTY

Badger Lake

Water Level: Very little water present.

Vegetation: Basin is growing up with veg, cottonwoods, and willows from the drought.

Notes:

Blue Lake

Water Level: Below crest in main lake. NW, SW, and SE Blue are basically dry.

Vegetation: Open water main lake with fringe of emergent veg forming on exposed mudflats

Notes: Boat ramp on main lake is usable.

Louisville Bend

Water Level: Nearing crest elevation.

Vegetation: Very little veg due to high water during the growing season.

Notes: Pumping started 08/11/24.

Tieville Bend

Water Level: 1.5 ft below crest.

Vegetation: Upper end will have some emergents around the perimeter.

Notes: Pumping started 08/15/24.

WOODBURY COUNTY

Browns Lake

Water Level: 1068.9, still a little over a foot below crest but improving.

Vegetation: Lots of emergents in the west half. Open lake with fringe of emergents on the east half of the lake.

Notes: Boat ramp is usable.

Luton WMA

Water Level: Shallow wetlands all dry.

Vegetation: Ring of emergents.

Notes:

Snyder Bend WMA

Water Level: Over crest.

Vegetation: Very little vegetation. Shorelines beat up during flooding this summer.

Notes: The south portion of the lake is closed to public access due to a recent congressional action transferring the property to the Winnebago tribe.

Winnebago Bend WMA

Water Level: Very little water present.

Vegetation:

Notes: Below the high bank is closed to public access due to recent congressional action transferring Winnebago Bend and a portion of Snyder Bend to the Winnebago tribe.

Table Marsh WMA

Water Level: Shallow wetlands

Vegetation: Perimeter of emergents around mudflats.

Notes: Conservation grazing on a small portion of the WMA using cattle.

NISHNABOTNA WILDLIFE UNIT

Wildlife Biologist: Matt Dollison

Date Updated: 10/10/24

FREMONT COUNTY

Riverton-Main Area

Water Level: The Larsen Tract (Main boat area) is ~20 inches below full pool. Most of the channels have two foot or less of water. The Johnson Tract (Walk-In Area) is 14 inches below full pool.

Vegetation: Much of the area has abundant annual wetland vegetation that should provide ample food, but some of the driest areas that were not flooded last year contain more upland species like giant ragweed that aren't as valuable.

Notes: The West Nish pump has been running since August 15th. Large boats with outboard motors will struggle to get around.

Riverton-Jensen Tract

Water Level: Full pool.

Vegetation: There is abundant annual wetland vegetation that should provide ample food for ducks.

Notes:

Forney Lake

Water Level: Dry.

Vegetation: Upland annuals.

Notes:

Copeland Bend

Water Level: The deepest excavations have water.

Vegetation: Most of the wetlands don't have significant vegetation in them.

Notes: There is a decent amount of concealment cover for hunters.

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

Water Level: Only the deepest excavations have water.

Vegetation: Most of the wetlands don't have significant vegetation in them.

Notes: There is a decent amount of concealment cover for hunters.

Cooper Creek

Water Level: Dry.

Vegetation: Some vegetation in the middle cell.

Notes:

Auldon Bar

Water Level: Dry except for the deep scour holes.

Vegetation: None.

Notes:

Botna Bottoms

Water Level: Dry.

Vegetation: Mix of cattails and wetland annuals.

Notes:

Draper Bottoms

Water Level: Only the deepest excavations have water.

Vegetation: Very little flooded vegetation.

Notes:

Percival I-29

Water Level: Dry except for the borrow pit.

Vegetation: Mix of cattails and wetland annuals.

Notes:

MILLS COUNTY

Willow Slough

Water Level: 20 inches below full pool.

Vegetation: Nice mix of perennial and annual emergent species.

Notes:

Haynie Slough

Water Level: Dry.

Vegetation: Abundant annual smartweed in much of the basin.

Notes:

Noddleman Island

Water Level: Only the deepest excavations have water.

Vegetation: Mostly cattails with some annuals.

Notes:

St. Mary's Island

Water Level: Only the borrow pits have water.

Vegetation: Almost none.

Notes:

Keg Creek I-29

Water Level: Significant shallower water present in the basin.

Vegetation: Decent amount of flooded vegetation.

Notes: Dry conditions have made the area better for ducks.

ODESSA WILDLIFE UNIT

Wildlife Biologist: Andy Robbins

Date Updated: 10/10/2024

DES MOINES COUNTY

Blackhawk Bottoms

- Water Level: Below normal due to lack of rain and low river levels. Round Pond is very low.
- Vegetation: Less vegetation than normal in Patterson Lake and Round Pond due to mid-summer flooding. The impoundment north of Patterson lake has excellent habitat conditions with smartweed and millet throughout the entire area.
- Notes: Rainfall is necessary to raise the water level in the impoundment. The water level is currently shallow but there is enough flooded vegetation to make portions of the area attractive to waterfowl.

LOUISA COUNTY

Cone Marsh

- Water Level: Near historic normal for this time of year. There's significantly more water than during the last two drought years. Rainfall is needed to further raise the water level.
- Vegetation: Dense emergent and submergent vegetation throughout the marsh. Dense lotus and lily pads will cover much of the open water until the first frost. Good habitat conditions.
- Notes:

Klum Lake

- Water Level: A pump is currently in operation to raise the water level to normal fall crest. The area should reach crest by the end of this week.
- Vegetation: Dense submergent vegetation throughout the marsh. Good stands of smartweed are also present. Emergents such as cattails and bulrush have been reduced in recent years as a result of aerial spraying. Good habitat conditions.
- Notes:

Odessa Wildlife Area

- Water Level: <https://water.noaa.gov/gauges/ODSI4>
Near normal for this time of year and rising slowly.
- Vegetation: Very limited amounts of mature moist-soil vegetation and other wetland plants due to mid-summer flooding. Very short moist-soil vegetation growth is present on the wetland edges and up in the buttonbush. The area is mostly open water. Generally poor habitat conditions compared to the past few years.
- Notes: The 9th highest flood on record on the Mississippi River flooded Odessa for all of July and most of August, right in the middle of the growing season. This delayed and prevented the establishment of moist-soil vegetation and killed any existing wetland vegetation. The buttonbush has recovered and leafed out again thanks to lower water levels in late August and September. The lateral ditches and dynamite ditch were completely impassable due to flood debris and downed trees. All of the ditches have recently been cleared of trees and debris by DNR staff.

MUSCATINE COUNTY

Wiese Slough

- Water Level: Near normal fall crest
- Vegetation: Thick emergent and submergent vegetation throughout the area. Dense lily pads will cover much of the area until the first frost.
- Notes:



PRAIRIE LAKES WILDLIFE UNIT

Wildlife Biologist: Dusten Paulus and Lucas Straw

Date Updated: 8/26/24 updated 9/24/2024 for Ruthven (DP)

CLAY COUNTY

Elk Lake

- Water Level: At or near crest elevation.
- Vegetation: Emergent and submergent vegetation is plentiful throughout the lake.
- Notes: Habitat conditions are good at Elk lake.

Barringer Slough

Water Level: At or near crest elevation

Vegetation: Emergent and Submergent vegetation is plentiful throughout the slough.

Notes: High High water may have closed some paths and traditional channels/pockets. Scouting is recommended prior to hunting.

Dan Greene Slough

Water Level: At or near crest elevation.

Vegetation: Emergent and submergent vegetation is plentiful throughout the slough

Notes: Habitat conditions are excellent at Dan Greene slough.

DU Marsh

Water Level: At or near crest elevation.

Vegetation: Emergent and submergent vegetation is plentiful throughout the marsh.

Notes: Habitat conditions are very good at DU marsh.

Trumbull Lake-Smith Slough Complex

Water Level: Trumbull lake is at crest elevation.
Smith Slough- Water levels are being held low for management objectives to be met. Smith Slough is still accessible by small boat, but scouting is recommended as the boat channels have changed, and currently has lower flow. Some open pockets of water remain accessible.

Vegetation: Emergent and submergent vegetation is plentiful throughout the lake and Smith slough.

Notes: Scouting is recommended prior to hunting, especially on Smith slough.

EMMET COUNTY

Cheever Lake

Water Level: Water levels are near crest

Vegetation: Cheever lake supports abundant and diverse beds of aquatic vegetation

Notes: Floating cattail mats have blocked the main boat access point. Preseason scouting is highly recommended

Four-Mile Lake Complex

Water Level: Water levels are near crest on Four Mile Lake. Smaller wetlands mostly have

hunnable water.

Vegetation: Four Mile lake supports quality stands of emergent and submergent aquatic vegetation. Smaller wetlands have abundant aquatic vegetation.

Notes: Floating cattail mats periodically block both the north and south boat accesses on Four Mile Lake. Preseason scouting is highly recommended

Ingham High Complex

Water Level: Water levels are near crest on Ingham, High, and Cunningham. East Slough, Snipe Meadow, and West Swan Lake are all in drawdown. Smaller wetlands have huntable water

Vegetation: Ingham Lake, High Lake, and Cunningham Slough have very little vegetation. East Slough, Snipe Meadow, and West Swan Lake all have abundant emergent vegetation. Smaller sloughs and wetlands have abundant vegetation

Notes: Preseason scouting is highly recommended. Ingham Lake and High Lake provide the best opportunity for boatable water.

Iowa Lake and Iowa Lake Marsh Complex

Water Level: Water levels are near crest. Smaller wetlands on this complex have huntable water.

Vegetation: Iowa Lake has very little aquatic vegetation. Smaller wetlands on the complex have abundant vegetation.

Notes: Preseason scouting is highly recommended

Tuttle Lake Complex

Water Level: Water levels are near crest. Smaller wetlands on this complex have huntable water

Vegetation: Tuttle Lake has little to no vegetation. Smaller wetlands have abundant vegetation from 3 years of drought

Notes: Preseason scouting is highly recommended

KOSSUTH COUNTY

Goose Lake Complex

Water Level: Water levels are about 1 foot below crest. Smaller wetlands on this complex have huntable water

Vegetation: Goose lake has a ring of emergent vegetation, with abundant submergents. Smaller wetlands have abundant vegetation from 3 years of drought.

Notes: Preseason scouting is highly recommended

PALO ALTO COUNTY

Blue-Wing Marsh

Water Level: At or near crest elevation.

Vegetation: Emergent and submergent vegetation is plentiful throughout the marsh.

Notes: Very good habitat conditions, abundant submergent vegetation throughout the complex this year.

Dewey's Pasture Complex

Water Level: All wetlands at or near crest elevation.

Vegetation: Emergent and submergent vegetation is plentiful throughout the complex.

Notes: Habitat conditions are excellent at the complex.

Fallow Marsh

Water Level: At or near crest elevation.

Vegetation: Emergent and submergent vegetation is plentiful throughout the marsh.

Notes: Habitat conditions are very good at Fallow marsh.

Rush Lake

Water Level: At or near crest elevation.

Vegetation: Emergent and submergent vegetation is plentiful throughout the lake.

Notes: Habitat conditions are very good at Rush Lake.

RATHBUN WILDLIFE UNIT

Wildlife Biologist: Heath Van Waus

Date Updated: 8/27/2024

APPANOOSE COUNTY

Rathbun Lake Complex

Water Level: Current lake elevation is 905.5. Conservation pool elevation is 904. There is some shallow water in the upper impoundments. We've received more water this summer than in previous years but are still low.

Vegetation: Emergent vegetation is dense in most marshes.

Notes: There should be opportunities for teal hunters but scouting will be necessary.

Sedan Bottoms

Water Level: Low - mid crest.

Vegetation: Vegetation looks great. Both submergent and emergent vegetation is dense in most areas. Some wetlands will need a frost to kill the lilies covering the open water.

Notes: There should be opportunities for teal hunters but scouting will be necessary.

RED ROCK WILDLIFE UNIT

Wildlife Biologist: Todd Gosselink

Date Updated: 10/3/2024

JASPER & POLK COUNTIES

Colfax WMA and Chichaqua Bottoms Green Belt WMA

Water Level: Wet conditions earlier have turned very dry with ponds, oxbows and marshes losing much water, with the Skunk River still at very low levels. The river levels impact the oxbows in the floodplain, and the very low river levels are impacting adjacent wetlands.

Vegetation: Vegetation in most areas has recovered from the major flooding events

earlier this summer with good stands of vegetation present, and will provide great habitat if rains occur.

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 at very low levels.

Rock Creek Marsh

Water Level: The water level is determined by the elevation of Rock Creek Lake, which is currently at normal pool, and the marsh has been fully saturated with the heavy rains this summer, but is slowly drying up with the dry conditions the past month.

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: Good for walk-in access.

MARION COUNTY

Red Rock Reservoir

Water Level: Lake Red Rock pool is currently slowly rising and projected to be at 741.8 on October 5. The DNR has requested that the USACE raise the lake pool to 742.5 on Oct. 5, 743.0 on Oct 19, 743.5 on Oct 26, and 744.0 on Nov 2. River in-flows have fallen to drought levels of last year, even with all the rain earlier this year. Due to construction on the Red Rock Dam, 744 is the maximum we will be allowed this year. 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/pe/forecast.html>

Vegetation: The vegetation and food will be highly reduced. The high lake levels this summer reduced the growing season at Red Rock at 744 and below. The lake did not reach normal pool of 742 until August 12. A delayed fall pool raise will allow the vegetation more time to grow and produce seed that could be flooded later in the year. 300 acres of Japanese millet was also planted in the Swan refuge and Red Rock delta area. The warm fall has allowed much of these plants to grow and produce seed.

Boat Access: The Box Cars, OK Hill, and Bennington boat ramps are all accessible. However, due to more siltation this spring, the Walnut Creek Cut will not be passable until higher lake levels are reached, typically at least 744.

Notes: Suspending raising the lake levels this year will give the Japanese millet and natural vegetation a chance to grow and produce floodable seed for waterfowl later in the year.

Swan Refuge

Water Level: The refuge sustained some damage on the dikes due to summer flooding, but repairs this year should allow for pumping later this fall.

Vegetation: Flooding this summer killed back the vegetation, but natural regrowth is well on its way. Japanese millet was also planted in the refuge.

Notes: A delayed pumping schedule this year in the refuge will provide the planted and natural vegetation time to grow and produced seed that can be flooded later this fall.

WARREN COUNTY

Banner Flats WMA

Water Level: The wetlands in this area are oxbows or constructed basins vary in water levels. The large reconstructed wetland by the shooting range is half full. Other wetland water levels were full, but have dropped significantly with the dry conditions the past month. Future levels will vary depending upon the weather and the proximity of the wetland to the Middle River channel, which is currently at very low at this time of year.

Vegetation: Good stands of moist soil and emergent plants are present in the wetland areas, but water levels in the vegetation are low.

Notes: These are walk-in areas.

Red Rock WMA

Water Level: There are numerous oxbows and constructed wetlands in the South River Unit, SW of Hartford. Most wetlands have less water in them due to the dry conditions.

Vegetation: Vegetation stands vary based on the summer flooding. Some areas are excellent, and other areas were flooded out in the summer and have recovered.

Notes: These are walk-in areas.

Red Rock WMA Sub-impoundments

- Water Level: Little Hartford wetland has no water left from the flooding, and walk-in only, no boat access. Big Hartford (Richard's Marsh) was very full from the flooding this summer, but has dropped a couple of feet as of today. Pumping is planned in early October to bring levels back up. The boat ramps are both currently usable.
- Vegetation: Both marshes have good vegetation, but reduced growth than in dry years due to flood conditions this summer.
- Notes: Good walk-in access in addition to boat access.

Runnells Marsh

- Water Level: The Runnells Marsh has good levels currently, but is slowly receding due to low flows in Mud Creek. It is a foot lower than the beginning of September. All of Mud creek flow is currently being diverted into the marsh to maintain the level, but creek flows will determine the levels.
- Vegetation: There is good moist soil plant growth throughout all of Runnells Marsh since it did not completely get submerged by the summer flooding (higher elevation than the Red Rock delta area).
- 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

Wildlife Biologist: Josh Gansen and Dean Nelson

Date Updated: 10/04/2024

GREENE COUNTY

Dunbar Slough WMA

- Water Level: 6" below crest elevation.
- Vegetation: Dense emergent and submergent vegetation throughout the marsh.
- Notes: Outboards will have difficult time with submergent vegetation

Dunbar Slough WPA

- Water Level: Wetlands are dry due to a water control structure failure this summer.

Vegetation:

Notes:

Goose Lake WMA

Water Level: Marsh is in drawdown due to construction project to be completed this fall/winter

Vegetation: Dense submergent vegetation

Notes: Not accessible by boats. Walk-in hunting would be extremely difficult.

Snake Creek WMA

Water Level:

Vegetation:

Notes:

GUTHRIE COUNTY

Bays Branch WMA

Water Level: 4-6" below crest elevation.

Vegetation: Dense submergent vegetation throughout the marsh.

Notes: Outboards will have a difficult time with submergent vegetation.

Lakin Slough

Water Level: 12" below crest elevation.

Vegetation: Dense emergent and submergent vegetation throughout the marsh.

Notes: Outboards will have difficult time with submergent vegetation

McCord Pond

Water Level: 4" below crest elevation.

Vegetation: Dense emergent and submergent vegetation throughout the marsh.

Notes: Outboards will have difficult time with submergent vegetation

POLK COUNTY

Saylorville Reservoir

Water Level: 836.7 and on the rise to 837

Vegetation: Poor vegetation due to flooding

Notes:

STORY COUNTY

Hendrickson Marsh

Water Level: Crest

Vegetation: Stands of emergent vegetation along the shorelines. Heavy submergent vegetation

Notes: Outboards will have difficult time with submergent vegetation

SUGEMA WILDLIFE UNIT

Wildlife Biologist: Jeff Glaw

Date Updated: 10/9/2024

KEOKUK COUNTY

Hayesville Bend WMA

Water Level: Hunttable water in the main wetland this year

Vegetation: A variety of emergent vegetation along the edges of the wetland area

Notes: Take time to pre-scout the area for water levels before the waterfowl seasons

VAN BUREN COUNTY

Lake Sugema

Water Level: Main lake and sub-impoundments are at crest

Vegetation: A variety of emergent vegetation along the edges of the wetland areas and the lake

Notes: Take time to pre-scout the area before the waterfowl seasons

DeVoss/Foster WMA

Water Level: Huntable water in the wetland this year due to timely rain
Vegetation: A variety of emergent vegetation on the edges of the wetland area
Notes: Take time to pre-scout the area before the waterfowl seasons

Fox River WMA

Water Level: Plenty of water in the wetland this year due to timely rain
Vegetation: A variety of emergent vegetation in the wetland areas
Notes: Take time to pre-scout the area before the waterfowl seasons

UPPER IOWA WILDLIFE UNIT

Wildlife Biologist: Troy Anderson

Date Updated: 09/23/2024

ALLAMAKEE COUNTY

Mississippi River-Pool 9

Water Level: The water level in pool 9 is at to slightly below “normal” Fall pool level
Vegetation: With the high water conditions for much of the summer the emergent vegetation is short and may have some mudflats with little vegetation. Some submergent vegetation is present
Notes: Pre scouting is recommended

CLAYTON COUNTY

Mississippi River-Pool 10

Water Level: The water level in pool 10 is at to slightly below “normal” Fall pool level
Vegetation: With the high water conditions for much of the summer the emergent vegetation is short and may have some mudflats with little vegetation. Some submergent vegetation is present
Notes: Pre scouting is recommended

WINNESHIEK COUNTY

Cardinal Marsh-Main Marsh

Water Level: Good huntable water level for early season

Vegetation: Good submergent and emergent vegetation

Notes: Cement boat ramp on the north side, water and submerged vegetation may make it difficult for outboard motors. Mud motors or surface drive motors are recommended.
Pre scouting is recommended

Cardinal Marsh-Segments

Water Level: *Segment "A"* was drawn down this summer and has a few huntable pockets for the early season and we are trying to add water throughout the season
Segments "B-D" we held water throughout the summer and we have good huntable open water for the early season.

Vegetation: *Segment "A"* is full of emergent vegetation (bidens, rice cutgrass and smartweed)
Segments "B-D" have good submergent and emergent vegetation with open water pools

Notes: Segment are walk-in only, pre scouting recommended