

## **Managing Swan Lake's Assets**

How can Silver Lake be managed to maintain sufficient water supplies for wetland management, increase habitat diversity, improve recreational resources and provide habitat for migrating birds through development and expansion as opposed to eliminating the asset?

### **Wetland Management**

Silver Lake provides a reliable, cheap and consistent supply of water that is used to provide exceptional moist soil conditions for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. When hot, dry summers extend deep in to the fall season, Silver Lake provides the opportunity to provide suitable habitat despite the dry conditions. Utilization of Silver Lake is much more economical than the cost of the installation, operations and maintenance cost of deep water wells. Wetland management at the mercy of the weather pattern does not provide any guaranteed ability to provide quality habitat. Successive dry years may impact the current migration patterns of waterfowl in the area if suitable habitat is not available. It is unknown what impact the reduction of Silver Lake could have on the area's aquifer and availability of water from the aquifer for private landowners around the Refuge. Silver Lake has been a major asset for 70 years. Appropriate planning and resource allocation will ensure that Silver Lake can provide a reliable, cheap and consistent water source for another 70 years to come.

### **Habitat Diversity**

Several hundred acres between Silver and Swan Lake have been identified to contain manageable elevations for introducing more emergent wetland habitat as well as opportunity to provide flooded agricultural fields. The development of the area will improve reliable habitat for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds.

### **Recreational Resources**

Fishing at Silver Lake attracts many people from outside the area that contribute to the local economy. Silver Lake has potential to provide more opportunities for fisherman with improved accessibility, upkeep and fisheries. Bow fishing is a sporting opportunity that is popular at Silver Lake that will help reduce carp population.

### **Waterfowl Impact**

Silver Lake is a central draw for hundreds of thousands of snow geese in fall and early spring. Without Silver Lake, the snow geese will not rest over in the area. The lake provides the best suitable habitat for diving ducks at Swan Lake NWR. Reducing the size of Silver Lake will lead to habitat conditions similar to Swan Lake. Currently, Swan Lake is overrun with bulrush and cattails which does not provide quality habitat for waterfowl or shorebirds.

### **How can this be accomplished?**

- Manage Silver Lake as an asset
- Improve capability to store water
- Create additional channels/canals to provide new emergent wetland areas
- Improve fisheries within Silver Lake
- Improve boat ramp accessibility
- Improve landscape of tributaries coming into Silver Lake
- Explore possibilities of decreasing turbidity in Silver Lake such as:
  - Improve landscape of tributaries entering the lake
  - Dredge portions to increase depth , increase water storage and fish habitat

- Construct islands to reduce wave action and create terrestrial habitat
- Placing silt basins tributaries feeding Silver Lake