



Wood Duck Nest Box Success within the New Brunswick - Nova Scotia

Border Area, 1976. W.R. Barrow, January, 1977.

DATA FILE

Wood Duck Nest Box Success within the New Brunswick-Nova Scotia  
Border Area, 1976

Nest boxes have been erected throughout the border area for approximately fifteen years. Probably the first structures were installed within the Missaquash Marsh in 1963 and eventually, after contributions from several individuals, over thirty boxes existed within the area. Only one record of Wood Duck use, in two successive years, has been recorded from this marsh and now, largely because of neglect, none of these boxes are suitable as nesting structures.

The Amherst Point Migratory Bird Sanctuary and the Tintamarre National Wildlife Area also contain nest boxes (Figures 1 and 2). While these boxes have been maintained over the past few years, the results have not been encouraging. Wood Duck use has been non-existent and the results for 1976 are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

The effect of ice and rising water on several nest boxes erected on pipes was certainly a limiting factor as the nesting potential was destroyed. Such natural phenomena can be corrected, however, by simply moving the boxes.

The use of many of the boxes by the English Starling is definitely a problem and is probably directly related to the habitat. Nest boxes erected close to civilization and its associated open fields where these starlings feed, were definitely used more than the isolated boxes.

While predators and natural occurrences may deter Wood Duck use in any location, no doubt habitat preference is the controlling factor. Mature stands of hardwood with the availability of unlimited natural cavities in close proximity to water is non-existent within the





Comparison photos of Wood Duck habitat found in the Border Area (above) and Saint John River Valley (below).



border area. Instead, second growth stands of mixed woods are dominant throughout the area and provide virtually no habitat for Wood Ducks.

Although routine maintenance and a check on nest box success in 1977 will be carried out, it is believed that this type of Wood Duck management should be withdrawn from the border area and possibly the Maritimes, with the exception of a few isolated areas.

February, 1977  
Sackville, New Brunswick

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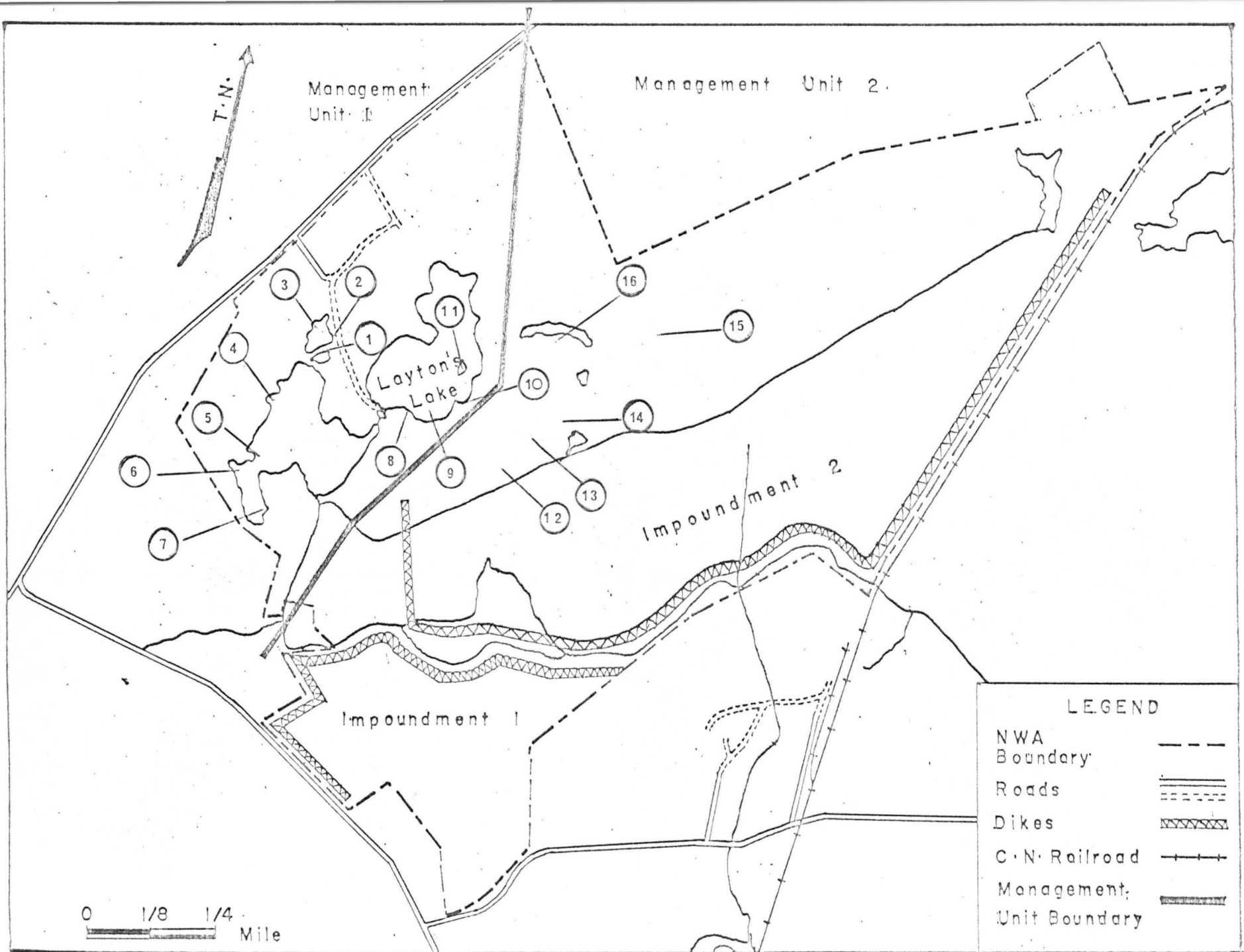


Figure 1. Nest box locations within the Amherst Point Migratory Bird Sanctuary - 1976.

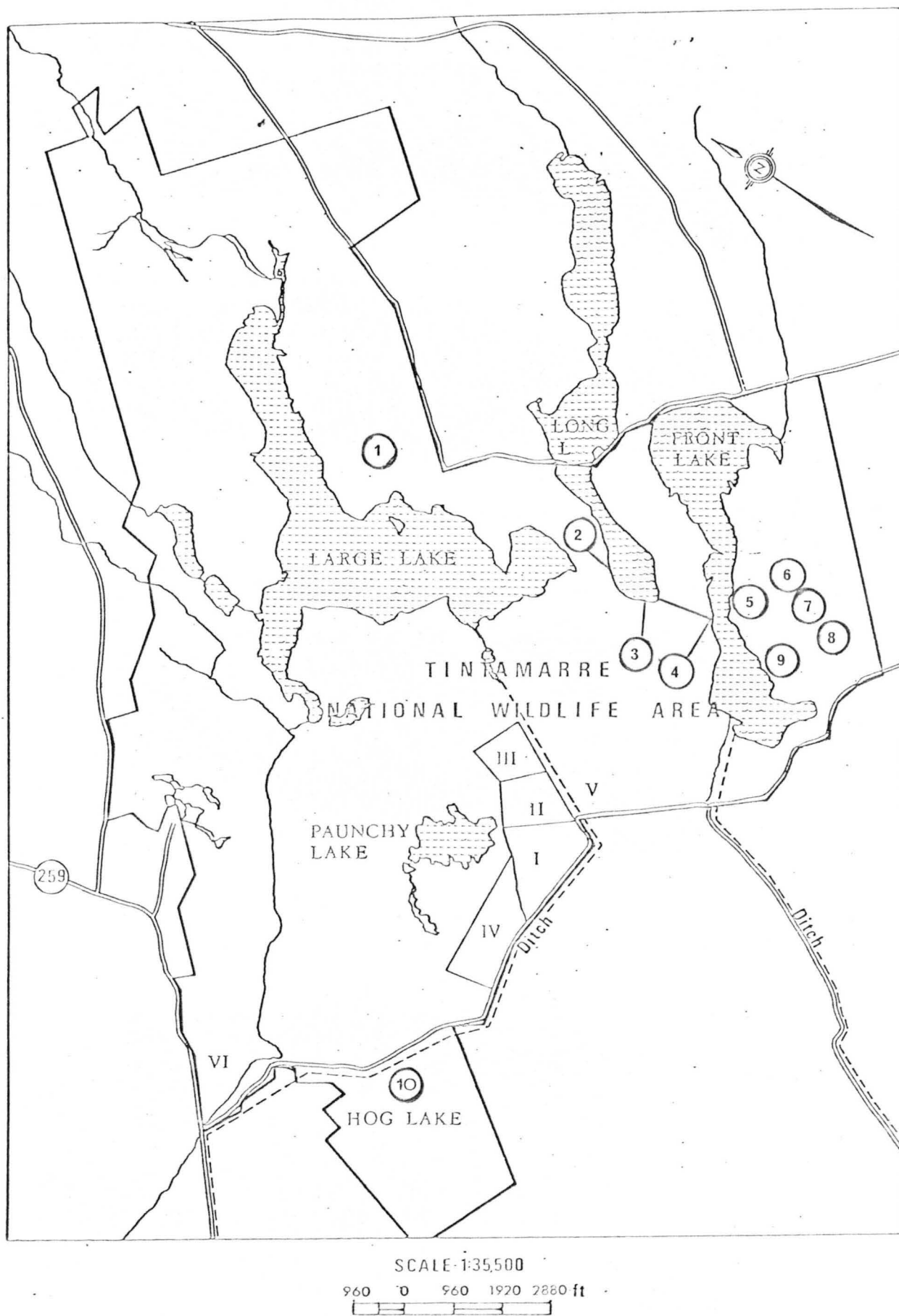


Figure 2. Nest box locations within the Tintamarre National Wildlife Area.

Table 1. Results of a check of Wood Duck boxes at the Amherst Point  
Migratory Bird Sanctuary June 3, 1976

Box number	Active	Non- active	Species	Comments
1				
2				
3	yes		Starling	5 young
4	yes		Starling	6 young
5	yes		Starling	5 young
6	yes		Grackle	5 young
7	yes		Kestrel	5 eggs
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				

Table 2. Results of a check of Wood Duck boxes at the Tintamarre National Wildlife Area June 17, 1976

Box number	Active	Non-active	Species	Comments
1				
2				
3				dead starling in nest
4				
5				
6				
7	yes		Starling	young in nest
8				Box off pole
9	yes		Starling	Eggs present in nest
10				