

Refuge near Mound City increased from 173,000 on Feb. 21 to almost 800,000 on Feb. 28, according to the refuge's weekly waterfowl counts.

Besides the refuge, migrating geese and ducks, shorebirds and songbirds can be seen at MDC conservation areas. The Cooley Lake Conservation Area in Clay County and the Little Bean Marsh Conservation Area in Platte County are within the Kansas City metro area. But wetlands in the rural areas of northwest and west central Missouri also attract migrants, such as the Nodaway Valley Conservation Area in Holt and Andrew counties, or the Four Rivers Conservation Area in Bates and Vernon counties.

Visit the mdc.mo.gov website for locations, directions and descriptions of conservation areas.

Geese are among the first birds to head north once the days lengthen and a warming period arrives, Raedeke said. Ducks, shorebirds and songbirds will follow with the peak times to see migrating wetland birds from now into April.

The snow geese usually head north during a February warm up, he said. But the snow and bitter cold that lingered this winter delayed the peak snow goose migration to early March. It's warming up now though and waterfowl are on the move.

"Right now is a good time to watch spring migration," Raedeke said. "Sometimes I like to go to the marsh and put out some decoys, because it's just fun to watch the ducks."

MONTANA

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks' Upland Game Bird Enhancement Program's citizen advisory council will meet in Miles City April 16-17 at FWP's Region 7 headquarters, 352 I-94 Business Loop, beginning at 12:30 p.m. April 16.

During its first tour of southeastern Montana, council members will tour habitat projects and sage grouse and sharp-tailed grouse leks.

"Prairie grouse and wild turkey in the southeast portion of the state are – to varying degrees – situated within a landscape of rangeland, cattle, energy exploration and production," said Joe Perry, council chair. "It is especially important for the council to visit this area because of its unique game bird habitat needs and management challenges."

Last year the advisory council submitted recommendations to the FWP Commission on a long-range strategic plan for FWP's Upland Game Bird Enhancement Program. The commission accepted the strategic plan and now the advisory council is focused on supporting its implementation.

The meeting is open to the public and comments are welcome during the comment period set on the agenda. Go to the FWP website at fwp.mt.gov and click [Upland Game Bird Council](#) for meeting details.

For more information, contact Debbie Hohler at: 406-444-5674, or by e-mail: dhohler@mt.gov.

NEBRASKA

Burchard WMA to Close for Improvements March 28

Public access to Burchard Wildlife Management Area in Pawnee County will be closed for construction beginning March 28, according to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

The reservoir will be drawn down to repair the damaged outlet structure while protecting the quality fishery. Work also will be done to improve boat and angler access and enhance aquatic habitat during the project. The goal for completion of the project is spring of 2013. Project updates will be released periodically.

NORTH DAKOTA Spring Snow Goose Hotline, Website Provide Migration Updates

North Dakota spring light goose hunters can track general locations of geese as birds make their way through the state during the upcoming spring season.

Hunters are able to call (701) 328-3697 to hear recorded information 24 hours a day. Migration reports are also posted on the North Dakota Game and Fish Department website, gf.nd.gov. Updates will be provided periodically during the week as migration events occur, until the season ends or geese have left the state.

Availability of food and open water dictate when snow