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Snow Geese Make Return to Squaw Creek

(AP) -- More than a million snow geese have been counted at a northwest Missouri refuge in an annual spectacle that pumps much-needed revenue into the area's economy.

The Kansas City Star reports this year's gathering got off to a slow start because of frozen wetlands at Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge 90 miles north of Kansas City.

Wildlife biologist Darrin Welchert says he counted only two geese at the refuge on March 5, but two days later - after the weather turned warmer - that number rose to 750,000 and later hit 1.2 million.

A 2013 Fish and Wildlife Service report estimates nearly 300,000 tourists come to the refuge each year to see the geese, adding about \$2.6 million to the economies of Holt County and nearby Buchanan County.

Associated Press