



# STATE CONSERVATION REPORT

## ALASKA

2013

### CONSERVATION SUMMARY

To understand the scope of Ducks Unlimited's work in Alaska, it's important to first establish the size and immensity of the state. Alaska is the largest of all 50 states in land area at 586,412 square miles, which is over twice the size of Texas, the next largest state. Counting territorial waters, Alaska by itself is larger than Texas, California and Montana combined. It's also larger than the combined area of the 22 smallest U.S. states. So what kind of conservation work is Ducks Unlimited doing in Alaska? Mapping and planning for this vast, variable and often remote landscape.

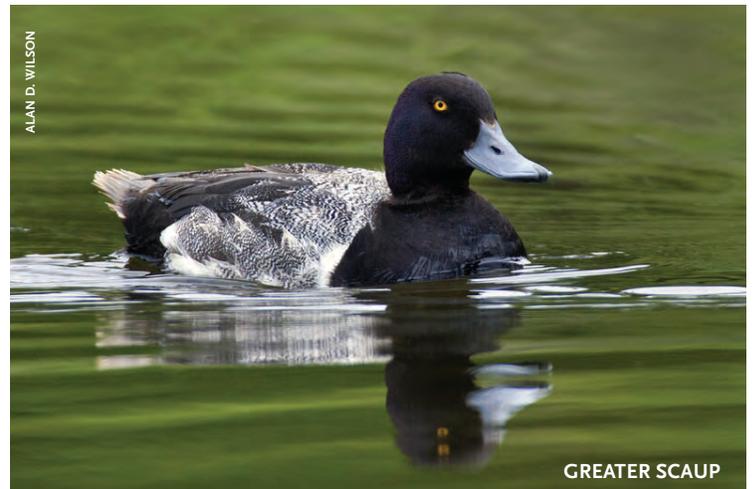
The majority of Alaska's wetlands and Boreal Forest are prime brood-rearing habitats for waterfowl and are already protected by the U.S. government, so restoration opportunities and needs are rare. In order to help keep Alaska's pristine ecosystems intact for future generations, DU uses sophisticated Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology to map huge portions of the state's landscapes. The complex maps are then used by the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management and other federal and state partners and non-governmental agencies to make informed land management decisions. Knowledge of the size, shape, distribution and extent of land-cover types, when linked with information on species habitat and human activities, can vastly improve decision-making capabilities for natural resources managers. Over the past 20 years, staff from DU's Western Region have mapped nearly 200 million acres of land throughout Alaska and have developed efficient methods for gathering the field data required to produce these maps.

### SPOTLIGHT PROJECTS

Ducks Unlimited is currently working with the North Slope Science Initiative to produce an updated land-cover map for the north slope of Alaska. This map will act as a base data layer providing information for future landscape modeling and management decisions for the North Slope. The full extent of the map will cover nearly 60 million acres, including the arctic coastal plain region of Alaska's North Slope, which provides key breeding and staging areas for numerous waterfowl species (notably black brant, white-fronted geese, long-tailed ducks and several eider species) as well as vast numbers of shorebirds, caribou and other wildlife.

DU is also partnering with the U.S. Forest Service to map the 400,000-acre Yakutat Foreland area of Alaska's south-central coast. This large mosaic of wetlands, forests and shrub land is one of three "Key Coastal Wetlands" identified by the Forest Service as critical stopover points in Alaska for waterfowl and shorebirds migrating along the Pacific Flyway. In this project,

the Forest Service has asked DU to utilize helicopters to efficiently gather wetland and vegetation data for more than 600 field sites across the largely road-less project area. The Forest Service's Remote Sensing Application Center will then use this information to produce the land-cover map for the area.

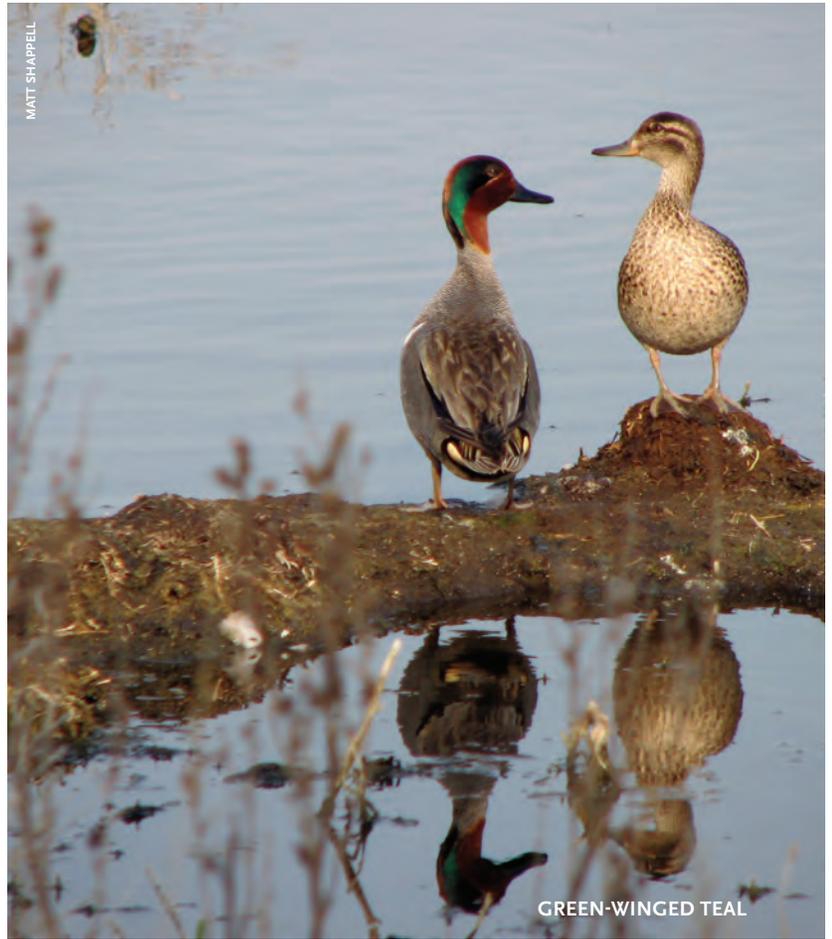


GREATER SCAUP

## TAKE THE INITIATIVE – HELP DU PRESERVE ALASKA’S BOREAL HABITAT

Alaska’s boreal forest is contiguous with that of western Canada. These landscapes are comprised of immense tracts of unspoiled wetlands where life begins for millions of ducks, geese, and a myriad of other migratory birds. These boreal forests are the breeding and brood-rearing grounds for a significant number of ducks and geese making the intercontinental journey down the Pacific Flyway. Unfortunately, resource development is expanding rapidly in the boreal, threatening these critical habitats.

Ducks Unlimited is working to identify and protect North America’s most important boreal wetland habitats. Your charitable support of The Alaska Initiative, Born to Fly, will enable Ducks Unlimited to conduct important science, public policy, and outreach efforts. DU’s research and evaluation efforts are the foundation upon which our direct conservation programs and our policy and outreach work are based. Your generous gift to The Alaska Initiative, Born to Fly will help conserve the remaining undisturbed breeding grounds for waterfowl in the United States and Canada, part of Ducks Unlimited’s efforts to ensure strong populations of waterfowl across the continent.



For more information on The Alaska Initiative, Born to Fly, contact:

**Mike Drake** at 971-271-4001/mdrake@ducks.org

**Steve Schmitt** at 360-991-7461/sschmitt@ducks.org

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## MAKE A DIFFERENCE! BE A LEADER! BECOME A DU VOLUNTEER!

Ducks Unlimited needs your help. The best way to promote healthy waterfowl populations is by volunteering with your local DU committee. Funds raised through local events are the foundation of the organization’s conservation efforts. Your support also helps DU’s policy team positively influence legislation important to waterfowl.

Visit [www.ducks.org/alaska](http://www.ducks.org/alaska) or contact your Regional Director **Dave Weber** at 907-770-7226/dweber@ducks.org



**WESTERN  
REGION**

3074 Gold Canal Drive  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670  
916.852.2000  
[www.ducks.org/alaska](http://www.ducks.org/alaska)