



Arizona | State Report 2012

CONSERVATION SUMMARY

Arizona's wetlands are few and far between, which makes those that remain a precious resource to waterfowl and other migratory birds. They are crucial to the survival of thousands of ducks and geese that use them as rest stops during the spring and fall migration. Ducks Unlimited is working hard to prioritize potential projects in Arizona and as funding becomes available, will continue its work on the ground to secure the future of waterfowl and other wetland-dependent species.

A major restoration project in the Cibola National Wildlife Refuge was recently completed but there is still more to be done. DU received North American Wetlands Conservation Act funding in March 2012 to restore 185 acres of wetland and riparian habitats along the Lower Colorado River portions of Arizona on the Cibola and Imperial national wildlife refuges. The restoration project will include removing invasive vegetation, restoring wetland topography, rebuilding dilapidated levees, restoring hydrology and water conveyance and restoring critical wintering and migratory habitat for a multitude of wetland-and-riparian-dependent wildlife.



SPOTLIGHT PROJECT | CIBOLA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

The Cibola National Wildlife Refuge is now flourishing, after the completion of a decade-long series of rehabilitation projects. Several water supply ditches and associated infrastructure were rehabilitated and riparian habitat restored as well. The improved water conveyance benefitted the "Island Unit" wetlands and the "Goose Unit" areas of the refuge. The Island Unit improvements provide a more dependable water flow to moist soil wetlands that provide habitat for migratory waterfowl and support public hunting during the waterfowl season. The Goose Unit is comprised of several hundred acres of flooded fields and wetlands and is critical to the Refuge's managed Canada Goose hunt. The

completed work completed has restored existing water supply ditches and rebuilt ditch gates to ensure enough water flow to meet habitat management goals.

Ducks Unlimited and partners also initiated restoration of riparian habitat, following a catastrophic fire that scorched several thousand acres at the refuge. This involved removing invasive salt cedar, grading of fields for irrigations, planting riparian and upland vegetation, and water distribution management.

So far, DU and its partners have helped restore or enhance nearly 4,400 acres of habitat to the benefit of waterfowl, wildlife and the public. DU's long-term goals for the refuge are to assist refuge managers with adding or improving quality waterfowl habitat and enhancing hunting opportunities for waterfowlers.



NAWCA NEEDS FUNDING, YOUR VOICE CAN HELP

Ducks Unlimited has provided a strong voice on public policy issues impacting wetlands and waterfowl conservation across North America for 75 years.

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) is the most significant federal program that DU partners with to protect and conserve habitat for North America's migratory bird populations. This program provides grants to partner groups—private landowners, local companies, conservation organizations, and more—who have matched the grant funds by raising money from non-federal sources. These funds are then used to impact wetlands that are in need of restoration and enhancement, and competition for these funds means the match is typically two to three times the grant amount.

2012 will be critical for NAWCA in two ways. First, NAWCA requires reauthorization every five years, with the current bill expiring in 2012. DU is seeking congressional support for bills in the Senate and the House that would reauthorize the program until 2017. This would allow the Congress to fund these wetland grants.

Second, federal budgets are lean this year and funding for programs such as NAWCA is at risk. NAWCA brings in more money to the federal treasury than it costs. It

also creates thousands of jobs each year, and creates business for hotels, restaurants, plant nurseries, construction companies and many others. This program is an incredibly valuable tool for natural resource protection in this country. It deserves strong, active support from DU supporters.



Please help by visiting www.ducks.org/nawca or by calling your Senators and House member to express your support for NAWCA

DU ARIZONA GRASSROOTS & CONSERVATION 2007 - 2011

5-Year Average Conservation
Expenditure Minimum Goal

\$5,223

5-Year Average Conservation
Expenditure Actual

\$170,678

The minimum conservation goal for each state is to spend the equivalent of 7.5% of total grassroots income raised in that state. This is based on a five-year average.


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CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF CONSERVATION SUCCESS



By Dale Hall
Ducks Unlimited CEO

This year marks a very special time for Ducks Unlimited. On Jan. 29, 1937, the More Game Birds in America organization transitioned into what would become the greatest wetland and waterfowl habitat conservation organization in the world! Throughout this year, we will be celebrating our 75th anniversary, and we have a great deal to celebrate.

DU CEO Dale Hall (left) and USFWS Acting Director Rowan Gould assist researchers with a duck banding project in the Prairie Pothole Region of North Dakota.

From our beginnings in Manitoba at Big Grass Marsh with a project impacting 100,000 acres, to our current partnership with the Pew Charitable Trusts to conserve 1 billion acres in the vast boreal forests, our work has been based on the simple principle of cooperation with others. During DU's first years, struggling farmers were DU's best partners; the Dust Bowl and the Great Depression were in full swing and significant acres of wetlands were being converted to farmland. The partnership with farmers was based on "water on the ground, ducks in the air," and immediately elevated DU's status as a group of people who wanted to roll up their sleeves and solve problems.

The very first volunteers to answer the call were hunters. Hunters know that to have enough ducks to enjoy our passionate pursuit, there must be healthy habitats. In 1934, when the Depression had more people in bread lines and westward caravans than were employed, duck hunters lobbied Congress to require them to pay to go hunting! This was followed in 1937 by hunters and firearm and ammunition industries lobbying for a tax on these items used solely for conservation. This law is still in place today and supports state fish and wildlife agencies. Also in 1937, Ducks Unlimited Incorporated and Ducks Unlimited Canada were born.

With DUC as the original mechanism to deliver projects on the ground in Canada, our partnership has been long and rich with science-based decisions and volunteer-driven passion. Until the 1980s, all DU's work was done in Canada. Then science unveiled the importance of migratory and wintering habitat. DU has continued its partnership with DUC to conserve valuable nesting grounds, but has expanded to include projects in all 50 states. We are rapidly closing in on 13 million acres conserved in North America, with a target of 750 million to 1 billion more acres conserved in Canada's boreal forests. What an accomplishment to celebrate!

But as we and our numerous partners celebrate these great successes, we must not rest on our accomplishments. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, we still lose more acres than we are able to conserve each year in the U.S., and across North America the pressures to convert valuable waterfowl habitat to other uses is greater than ever.

Our challenges are great, but with the continued dedication of our volunteers, members and staff, Ducks Unlimited WILL NOT FAIL! I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible over the next 12 months as we celebrate 75 years of phenomenal accomplishment. HAPPY ANNIVERSARY, DUCKS UNLIMITED!



Ducks Unlimited conserves, restores and manages wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people.



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