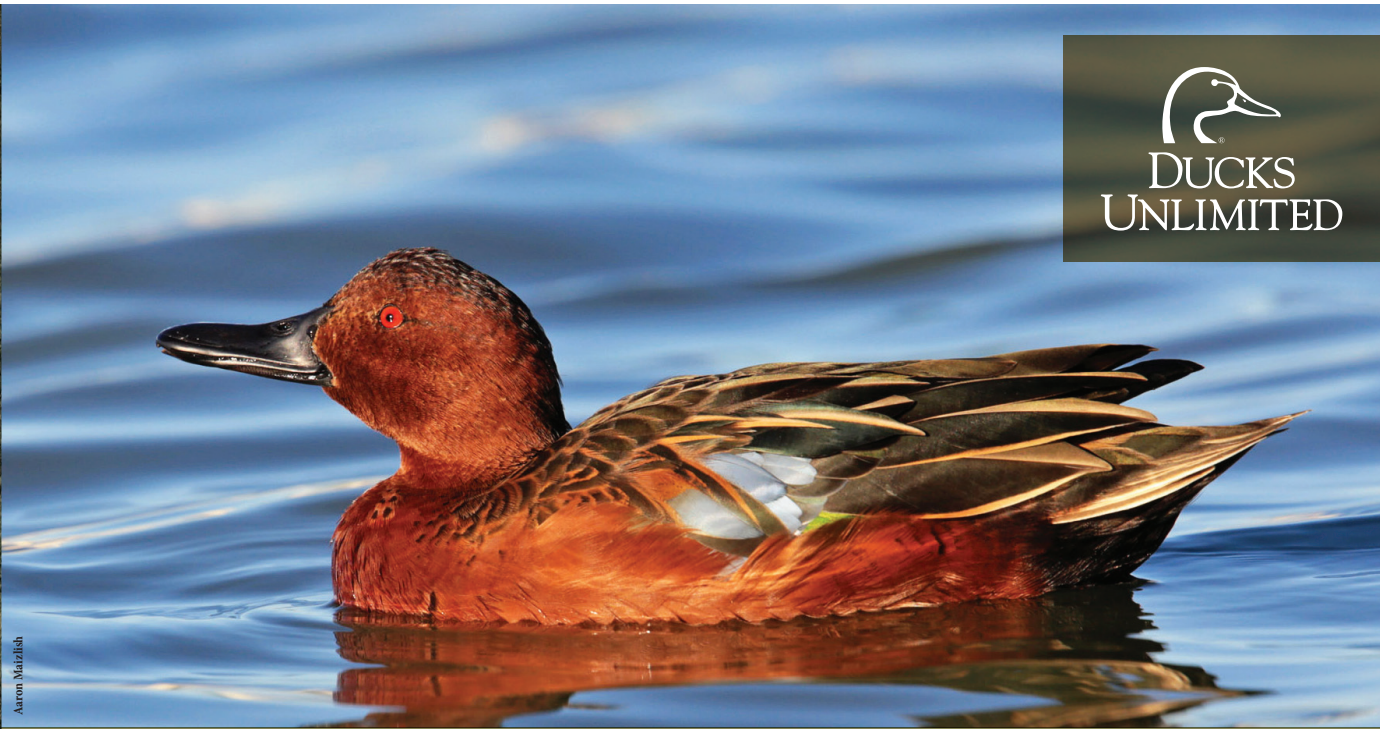


Aaron Mazlish



## STATE CONSERVATION REPORT

### CONSERVATION UPDATE

In collaboration with our partners, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Colorado Water Conservation Board, and private landowners, Ducks Unlimited continues to assist with post-flood recovery efforts along the South Platte River. Activities are focused in Weld and Morgan counties where impacts from the 2013 flood were most severe. DU biologists are assessing damage and rebuilding projects, as well as restoring river channels and associated wetland functions on parts of the river. These activities will continue through 2015.

Ducks Unlimited was asked to join the Middle South Platte River Alliance steering committee. This committee will assist the city of Evans, private landowners and Colorado Water Conservation Board with reducing future risks of flooding along the South Platte. A master plan is being developed by the City of Evans and consulting firm CDM Smith. The completed plan will identify risks and opportunities for reducing future flood impacts along the river. DU's expertise will help ensure riverine wetlands and other areas important to migrating waterfowl are considered throughout the process.

In 2014, DU spent more than \$1 million on projects in Colorado and conserved 1,103 acres. In addition to the projects highlighted in this report, DU restored 149 acres of waterfowl habitat adjacent to the Prewitt Reservoir in Morgan County. The project installed water control structures and drainage lines in a series of ponds dominated by cattails and tall emergent vegetation. Managers can now manipulate water levels to promote moist-soil plant communities beneficial to migrating waterfowl. Funding for projects in 2014 was provided by DU members and major donors, North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Colorado Water Conservation Board, Playa Lakes Joint Venture and private landowners.

With the continued support of DU's grassroots efforts in Colorado, and the shared desire of staff and supporters to improve habitat for ducks and opportunities for hunters, 2015 is sure to be an exciting year to deliver on DU's vision for the future. DU's success depends on members, volunteers, and donors who understand the importance of continually improving and protecting migration habitat in Colorado for mid-continent waterfowl.

## SWIFT PONDS RESTORED IN HONOR OF FLOYD AND LLOYD HOLMAN

In September, 2014 Ducks Unlimited held a wetland dedication event for Lloyd Holman, from Castle Rock. Lloyd donated \$50,000 to DU for a project to benefit waterfowl and local kids. Lloyd's wish was to provide youth with an area to learn about and gain respect for wetlands and all the species they support. He also wanted a special way to honor his best friend and twin brother, Floyd Holman, who passed away in 2010.

"This has been one of the proudest days of my life," said Holman.

Ducks Unlimited held the dedication ceremony on the Swift Ponds property, east of Fort Collins, where DU partnered with Colorado Youth Outdoors (CYO) to conduct a 62-acre wetland restoration project. CYO is a non-profit organization dedicated to building healthy relationships between kids and their parents through traditional outdoor recreation. The program offers a variety of outdoor activities including fly fishing, trap shooting, fly tying, archery, survival skills and more. CYO helps kids build

a lifelong love of recreation, which aligns with DU's goal of recruiting and retaining waterfowlers and with Lloyd's desire to encourage the next generation of conservationists.

"Lloyd was very pleased to see his gift put toward such a worthy cause and was thrilled to see his dollars at work on the ground," said Julia Firl, DU real estate specialist in Colorado.

The project on Swift Ponds is nearing completion and will restore the hydrology of the property's creek and its associated wetlands. In addition to benefitting ducks, geese and other wildlife, this project will be accessible to the thousands of kids who visit the Swift Ponds site each year. It will also provide important aesthetic and recreational benefits to the local community.

Lloyd's gift was enhanced by several partners, including DU, CYO, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Colorado Partners for Fish and Wildlife, the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife, the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory and the North American Wetlands Conservation Council.



*Lloyd Holman (center) poses with the cairn at Swift Ponds surrounded by DU staff, volunteers and project partners.*



## K4 RANCH SLOUGH RESTORATION

The K4 Ranch in Weld County is an important waterfowl area in the central South Platte River watershed. Warm-water sloughs provide waterfowl along the river with thermal cover, refuge from winds and seclusion from disturbances. They're also important for increasing winter survival.

Waterfowl habitat on the K4 Ranch was degraded due to loss of water delivery infrastructure and overgrowth of cattails and woody vegetation.

"Wintering waterfowl avoid areas with undesirable vegetation. The presence of these types of plants slows water flow, resulting in increased sedimentation and a greater potential to freeze during cold weather events," said Matt Reddy, DU regional biologist.

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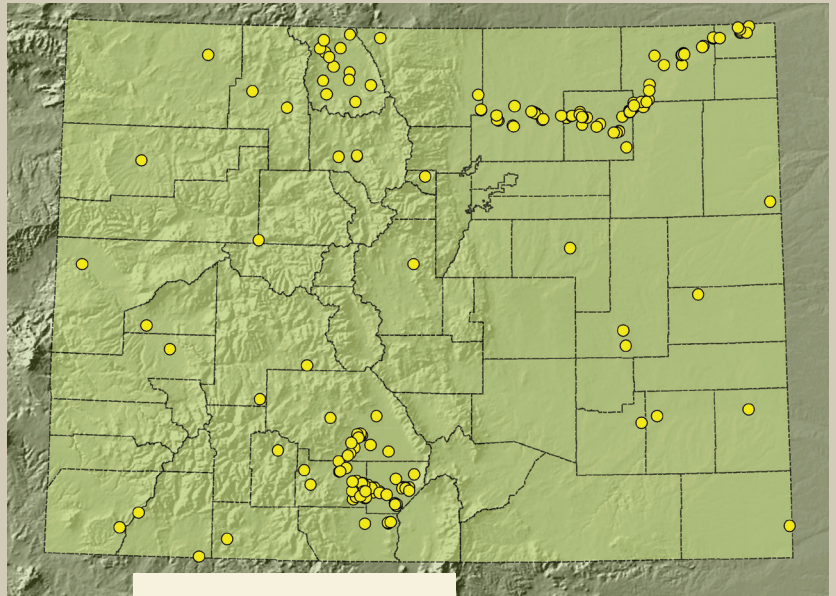
At a cost of more than \$125,000, DU restored 106 acres on the property by installing water-control structures, ditches and rehabilitating levees. The upgrades will increase water flow through two branches of the slough and control beaver impacts.

“We re-established normal water flows flushing sediment and stemming growth of undesirable vegetation. Proper maintenance of flows will improve food quantity and availability to waterfowl,” said Reddy.

Contributions for this project came from landowners, North American Wetlands Conservation Act and Colorado Parks and Wildlife’s (CPW) Wetlands Program. As part of the conservation agreement, the landowners will enter into a public access agreement with CPW to allow limited youth waterfowl hunting opportunities.

## PROJECT MAP

2003 - 2014



**TO DATE:**  
100,073 acres conserved  
90 in 2014

● Completed project

## MEET YOUR CONSERVATION STAFF



*Martin Grenier*  
Manager of Conservation  
Programs CO and WY

Martin Grenier joined DU in September, 2014 and brings a broad background of conservation expertise focused on delivering innovative solutions through building partnerships. In addition to overseeing the daily operations of the Fort Collins Office, Martin works with partners and helps conserve and restore wetlands in Colorado.

He was born in Montreal, Canada, grew up California,

is a U.S. citizen, and resided in Wyoming before moving to Fort Collins. Martin holds a bachelor’s degree in Wildlife Management from Humboldt State University and a master’s degree in Zoology and Physiology from University of Wyoming. Martin is a passionate waterfowler who also enjoys hunting elk, the art of charcuterie, and spending time with his wife, Ruth.



*William (Billy) Gascoigne*  
Resource Economist and  
Ecosystem Markets Specialist

Billy Gascoigne joined DU in 2014 to investigate emerging environmental markets and conservation finance opportunities for the Great Plains Region. He joined a team focused on leveraging DU’s conservation work and the resulting increase of ecosystem goods and services.

Billy helped complete the first registered carbon credits from working grasslands, which were recently sold to Chevrolet. In addition to overseeing the carbon program, Billy works to foster market-based solutions to water quality and quantity issues, as well as sustainable agriculture initiatives.

Billy grew up working on his family’s ranch in Central Valley, California. He holds a master’s degree in Agricultural and Resource Economics from Colorado State University.

## DOC HARDIN TRIBUTE

This past year Colorado Ducks Unlimited said goodbye to one of its best volunteers and supporters, William "Doc" Hardin. For more than two decades Doc served as an active Colorado volunteer. Many of those years were in leadership roles including area chair, district chair and state chair from 2011 to 2013. Doc and his wife, Meme, were always present at DU banquets, state conventions and they never missed a national convention.



*Doc's final hunt with friends. Left to right: Jerry Walkowiak, Bob Snyder, Doc Hardin and Pete Sexton*

In April, 2013, Doc was diagnosed with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, and passed away one year later on March 3, 2014. In his last year of life several DU friends rallied to ensure Doc filled some of his remaining days in the field with shotgun in hand. Two weeks prior to Doc's death he was still attending DU banquets.

"Doc was the epitome of a DU volunteer, giving hundreds of hours of true selfless service to the ducks," said Kirk Davidson, DU director of development.

Fitting for a volunteer of this caliber, on April 24, 2014, more than 150 folks gathered to pay respect to Doc in a first-class tribute event hosted by Pete Coors and attended by DU CEO Dale Hall and DU Region 2 Senior Vice President Clay Rogers. The event kicked off with an official military color guard entry and ended with guests feasting on an authentic crawfish boil with more than 400 pounds having been flown-in for the event. The tribute was executed in fine Cajun fashion fitting for this great outdoorsman and friend.

More than \$400,000 in major gifts was raised for wetlands conservation at the event including \$25,000 in grassroots dollars. With funds from the tribute, DU will create the Doc Hardin Wetlands Area which will be officially dedicated this spring. This area is part of the Bob Elliot State Wildlife Area near Brush, Colorado, and will be marked by a monument and cairn.

colorado  
2014



10,781 Members  
including  
698 Greenwings

(Based on numbers available 01/01/15)

As of 1/1/15, Ducks Unlimited Inc. had 604,906 adult members and 46,944 youth members. Ducks Unlimited Mexico had 4,615 members, while Ducks Unlimited Canada had more than 120,420 supporters including members, landowners, vendors, and event attendees.



**GREAT PLAINS  
REGION**

2525 River Road, Bismarck, ND 58503  
701.355.3500 • [www.ducks.org/colorado](http://www.ducks.org/colorado)

OUR MISSION is to conserve, restore and manage wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people.