



BARBARA MITERS



STATE CONSERVATION REPORT

CONSERVATION UPDATE

The state of Oregon has a rich history in duck hunting thanks to its many vitally important waterfowl habitats. Used by migrating, breeding or wintering waterfowl, these areas span the spectrum from tidally influenced marshes, high-elevation lakes and arid Great Basin oases. From Coastal Oregon and the Columbia River, which provides habitat for large numbers of wintering diving ducks, mallards and geese, to the eastern and southern parts of the state, Oregon provides some of the best nesting and brood-rearing territory for waterfowl in the Pacific Flyway. As is the case

in most western states, water is a critical resource, and Ducks Unlimited is constantly working to ensure that the interests of waterfowl are always represented.

There are a suite of projects slated for the Willamette Valley, including the Upshaw Floodplain Protection and Restoration project and a 300-acre enhancement of the Fern Ridge Wildlife Area in the southern portion of the valley. Additionally, DU has an opportunity to restore a diverse mosaic of habitats on 227 acres on the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge. In southern

Oregon, DU is working with private ranching operations to maintain flood irrigation practices and restore wet meadow habitat. In Harney County, DU is working closely with Malheur National Wildlife Refuge and its partners to control invasive carp and develop a state and transition model for wetland management. These are just a sampling of the many projects DU is undertaking in Oregon. As always, Ducks Unlimited will continue to seek out restoration and conservation projects that will benefit the waterfowl of the Pacific Flyway.

SPOTLIGHT PROJECT

The interior closed basin floodplains of Southern Oregon and Northeastern California are continentally recognized as the SONEC waterfowl priority region. The SONEC landscape is defined by a relatively high concentration of historic floodplain habitat that has been mostly converted to flood-irrigated haying and grazing operations on private lands. These flood-irrigated wetlands provide critical staging bioenergetic resources for continental populations of spring-migrating waterfowl and waterbirds in the Pacific Flyway. The flood-irrigation practices mimic the historic floodplain processes that provide groundwater recharge, in-stream flow duration and temperature amelioration, fish and wildlife habitat, and economic viability in this rural landscape. As flood-irrigation infrastructure degrades and/or the practice is abandoned for sprinkler irrigation or non-agricultural uses, floodplain functions suffer and critical habitat is lost. ►

Ducks Unlimited (DU), and its SONEC partners (Natural Resources Conservation Service, Intermountain West Joint Venture, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), have made recent investments in science, landowner outreach, basin planning, and conservation action, particularly in Harney and Lake Counties, Oregon. These investments have generated interest by landowners and identified innumerable opportunities for action. The partnership recognized a lack of capacity is preventing actions from achieving maximum outcomes. As implementation funding is always relatively limited, the strategic prioritization and timeliness of project implementation is critical to maximizing efficiency and effectiveness. For these reasons, DU and the SONEC Partnership hired two contractor positions – one in Lake County and one in Harney County. These DU contractors enable the partnership to keep pace with the developing momentum. Utilizing Farm Bill programs, the contractors are working directly with private landowners to maintain their flood-irrigation practices by refurbishing their infrastructure.



DAN & LINDA HUBBARD

TAKE THE INITIATIVE HELP DU CONSERVE HABITAT FOR WINGS & WETLANDS

Oregon provides a diversity of habitat that's vital to sustaining healthy waterfowl populations in the Pacific Flyway. The estuaries of Coastal Oregon and the Columbia River provide habitat for large numbers of wintering diving ducks, mallards and geese. Southern Oregon wetlands, notably the Klamath Basin, stage vast numbers of snow geese and most of the Pacific Flyway's pintails. Malheur Lake and other Great Basin wetlands provide important production habitats for redheads, gadwalls, cinnamon teal and more in eastern Oregon. Through our Wings & Wetlands Initiative, Ducks Unlimited is seeking charitable contributions of \$8.1 million to achieve our conservation goals in this region. Your charitable support will enable Ducks Unlimited to conduct important science, public policy, and outreach efforts, as well as conserve the breeding, migration and wintering habitats important to waterfowl. DU's research and evaluation efforts are

the foundation upon which our direct conservation programs and our policy and outreach work are based. The Wings & Wetlands Initiative encompasses Oregon, Washington and Idaho and all three states enjoy a close connection with Canada that has been strengthened on the wings of waterfowl. Birds move freely across the border during spring and fall migration and during winter months, in search of an ever-shrinking food supply. Habitat loss and water use on both sides of the border mean there will be no safe havens until we conserve what remains. A gift to DU's Wings & Wetlands Initiative will support projects close to home, but also will ensure that the remaining undisturbed breeding grounds on both sides of the border will be protected before restoration is required.

For more information on DU's Wings & Wetlands Initiative:

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