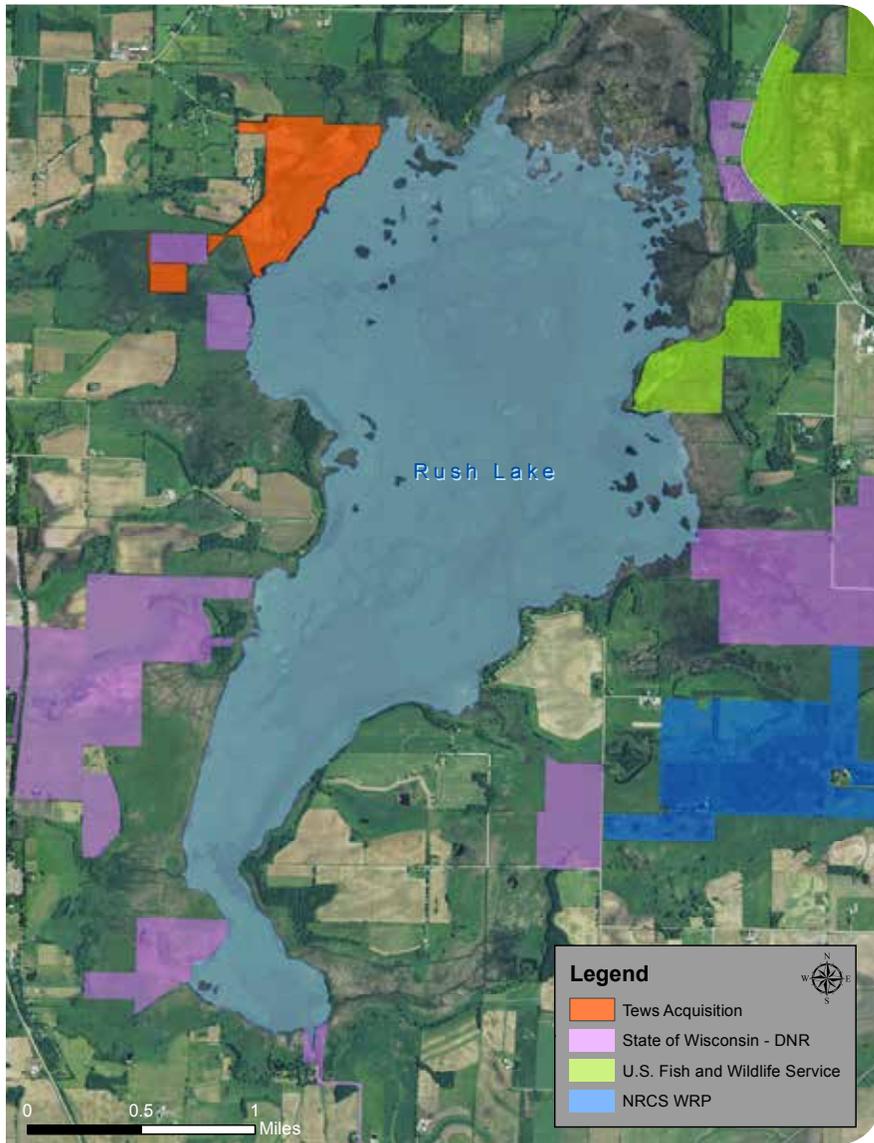


WISCONSIN

great lakes/atlantic region • 2016 state conservation report



DU PROTECTS FUTURE OF WATERFOWL HOT SPOT RUSH LAKE

*D*ucks Unlimited is returning to Rush Lake in an effort to further enhance one of eastern Wisconsin's premiere waterfowl destinations. In 2015 DU purchased more than 160 acres of wetlands and associated uplands on the northwest shores of the 2,700-acre lake and will begin wetland and grassland restoration.

The land features abundant wetland restoration potential and magnificent oak trees. It abuts existing Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources property and will likely be donated to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources once restoration is complete. DU will further leverage its dollars through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish & Wildlife program for restoration efforts.

DU has a long history on Rush Lake, most recently in 2005 assisting the Department of Natural Resources with a complete dam replacement and lake restoration project. This latest investment demonstrates the science-based delivery of conservation to priority habitats in DU's Great Lakes Initiative. It also shows the value of long standing partnerships.

The Fox River/Green Bay Natural Resources Trust Council helped make lake restoration happen in 2005 and also was key in making this \$600,000 acquisition possible.



Volunteers from Ducks Unlimited in Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources during a work day at Rush Lake.

DU DEDICATES NORTHWEST PRAIRIE POTHOLE PROJECTS IN WISCONSIN

*D*ucks Unlimited celebrated the successful management of northwest Wisconsin wildlife areas during a dedication ceremony Sept. 19. The dedication happened at Crex Meadows Wildlife Area, part of Ducks Unlimited's Big Rivers Initiative.

Crex is a 30,000-acre managed wildlife area that is home to more than 270 species of birds, more than 85 species of butterflies and 720 species of plants. A variety of mammals, reptiles, amphibians and insects also reside here.



The celebration commemorated past successes and a commitment to future of conservation, restoration and managing of this incredible area that is critical to waterfowl, other wildlife and people.

Success in managing this landscape is made possible thanks to the partnerships between organizations and state and federal governments, including the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Friends of Crex Meadows and Ducks Unlimited.

During the celebration, DU recognized Jerry McNally from Friends of Crex Meadows for his assistance, and to Jarrod Washburn, who donated the land to DU.

WILD RICE REINTRODUCED TO LOWER GREEN BAY NEAR CAT ISLAND CHAIN

*D*ucks Unlimited in 2015 continued efforts to restore lower Green Bay to its historically wetland-rich condition.

DU and the University of Wisconsin – Green Bay are planting wild rice, wild celery and bulrush in the former Duck Creek Delta in the wave shadow created by the Cat Island Chain, which was constructed in 2014. .

In fall 2015 DU planted eight acres of wild rice, and is studying how well the rice develops. Wild rice was once abundant in the bay, but today little of the vegetation, which is attractive to waterfowl, exists. Establishing rice plants is tricky, because it's targeted by carp and geese in its early growing phase. DU will know in fall 2016 if the plot is successful.

The bay historically was a verdant living water body, dominated by miles of submergent and emergent aquatic vegetation supporting vast flocks of migratory waterfowl and abundant aquatic life. Today, the extensive stands of aquatic and emergent macrophytes are gone, resulting in a significant loss of quality to what was historically among the most productive and important wildlife habitats within the Great Lakes.

DU's Cat Island efforts are funded from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service-Coastal Program and the Fund for Lake Michigan. The programs also will fund projects at Barkhausen Waterfowl Preserve in Brown County and Dunes Lake in Door County.



Ducks Unlimited Regional Director Chris Anderson spreads wild rice seeds into lower Green Bay in 2015.

ducks unlimited
PROJECTS

● Completed ★ Featured

Note: Project points may represent more than one project.

Crex Meadows

Tews Acres

2015
accomplishments

38 Projects

2,881 Acres Conserved

\$1,598,581 Invested



MEET YOUR WISCONSIN CONSERVATION STAFF

Since 2012, Brian Glenzinski has worked extensively on ecological restoration throughout Wisconsin on private and public lands from federal and state perspectives. His previous work at the state agency level focused primarily on wetland, grassland and savanna restoration in southern Wisconsin. Glenzinski has delivered Wetland Reserve and State Waterfowl Programs that conserved important wetland habitats in Wisconsin. He graduated from University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point with a degree in wildlife and biology in 1995. Brian works out of the Madison field office.

Contact: bglenzinski@ducks.org (608) 221-1206, Ext.12.

2015 DU WISCONSIN VOLUNTEER CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR: GREG MEISSNER

Greg Meissner and his hunting buddies established the Sturgeon Bay Chapter of Ducks Unlimited nearly 40 years ago and he's been a staple in lower Green Bay conservation efforts ever since.

Meissner grew up hunting with his father and discovered waterfowl hunting while attending college in central Wisconsin. It's now his passion.

Meissner is proud to have raised money for DU through the Sturgeon Bay Chapter, because he's supporting an organization that has directly helped the Great Lakes region around him.

"I was a biology major in college and I understand the importance of habitat," he said. "It's always more fun to turn over that check to the organization knowing they'll use the money in a pretty wise fashion."

Learn more about Greg Meissner at www.ducks.org/wisconsin



2015 WISCONSIN PARTNER OF THE YEAR: MIKE CARLSON

Ducks Unlimited relies on partners and organizations to complete its mission in every state. One of DU's greatest partners in Wisconsin is Mike Carlson, interim executive director for Gathering Waters, a statewide service center for Wisconsin's land trust community.

Carlson and Gathering Waters have worked for several years on getting policy issues approved that benefit both organizations, such as the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program. The program offers grants to help organizations preserve natural areas and wildlife habitat, protect water quality and fisheries, and expand opportunities for outdoor recreation.

"Land trusts help secure the property," he said. "Then Ducks Unlimited can come in with restoration expertise and do a great job of restoring the property. You've got the best of both worlds."

Carlson has been an active member of the Madison chapter of Ducks Unlimited for four years. Learn more about Mike Carlson at www.ducks.org/wisconsin

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Wisconsin is part of Ducks Unlimited's 21-state Great Lakes/Atlantic Region, a diverse landscape of habitats ranging from Prairie Potholes in the Midwest to coastal estuaries in the Atlantic Flyway.

Waterfowl know no boundaries. Because of that, conservation work done in Wisconsin in 2015 was a pivotal part of the overall wetland management strategy DU has established based on conservation science.

Ducks Unlimited had a record year in terms of support and acres conserved. Here in the Great Lakes/Atlantic Region, DU in 2015 used private donations and public funds to invest \$27,193,473 in conservation projects. That strong support and enabled our biologists and engineers to deliver focused, effective habitat conservation on 12,686 acres of wetlands.

The work contained in this report reflects Ducks Unlimited's commitment to Wisconsin. We appreciate your support and are eager to build on this success in 2016.



A handwritten signature in black ink.

David Brakhage
GLARO Director of Operations

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



**GREAT LAKES /
ATLANTIC REGION**

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