



80 Years of Conservation

DU CONSERVATION REPORT 2017

(C O L O R A D O)

MARTIN GRENIER

Manager of Conservation Programs for CO & WY

Spring is a good time for ducks in Colorado. Ducks Unlimited's accomplishments in 2016 enhanced 2,200 acres of waterfowl breeding and migration habitat in the state. These habitats are critical to ducks in the spring as they migrate north from their wintering grounds looking for places to rest and as they settle into areas to breed and nest.

The North Park region is a significant breeding area for ducks in Colorado. Ducks produced here are harvested throughout the state. Partnerships in the North Park area helped DU conserve breeding habitat on Lake Creek, which is owned by the State Land Board, and Richard State Wildlife Area (SWA)

which is owned by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. These areas are open to the public and near Lake John SWA, which forms a complex of wetlands where species like mallard, gadwall, lesser scaup, and blue-winged teal bring their ducklings for food and shelter. Ducks Unlimited's work on these properties included improving water delivery and development of two shallow water wetlands and surrounding habitats to enhance 200 acres.

The South Platte River region is a priority in Colorado for conserving spring waterfowl migration habitat. Working with state and private partners is the best way for DU to accomplish its conservation goals in this region. DU

completed projects on Prewitt SWA and on privately owned Ferguson Farms. On Ferguson Farms, DU enhanced 40 acres of shallow water wetlands and 360 acres of riparian habitat that will be managed with a new grazing program. Migrating birds need places to feed and rest undisturbed so they can finish their migration journey healthy and ready to breed. Ferguson Farms and Prewitt SWA are ideal for this purpose.

With the conservation work completed in 2016, Colorado will be ready when ducks arrive in the spring. Whether breeding or just passing through, DU is ensuring waterfowl are provided for in the state.





James Kennedy honored at luncheon for \$3.1 million gift to CSU.

JAMES KENNEDY'S GIFT TO CSU DEVELOPS NEW PROGRAM IN WETLANDS AND WATERFOWL CONSERVATION

Colorado State University (CSU) student Taylor Dunnigan is excited about James Kennedy's recent gift to the school establishing the new University Endowed Chair in Wetlands and Waterfowl Conservation. But as the current chairman of the school's Ducks Unlimited chapter and a CSU senior, he wishes he would be around to be a part of it.

"As someone who is passionate about waterfowl, I am happy to see James Kennedy's and Colorado State University's commitment to developing this program," Dunnigan said. "I wish it had come earlier in my time as a CSU student as I would have loved to have taken some of the courses that will be offered."

Kennedy's gift of \$3.1 million will ensure wetlands and waterfowl conservation education is available at CSU for years to come. The new program in the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology will include research, teaching and outreach, offering support for undergraduate and graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows. The program will be the first of its kind in the Central Flyway, which stretches from Canada through the Great Plains to Central America.

Ken Wilson, head of the CSU Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology Department, says James Kennedy's gift will be transformational. "It was clear from his visit that education and students are a high priority," Wilson said. "So too are collaborations between the university and organizations like Ducks Unlimited that this endowment will benefit."

Program efforts to address critical issues, such as water scarcity and management along with land protection efforts, will open up new opportunities for partnerships between CSU and DU.

CSU is conducting a nationwide search to fill the endowed chair.

DUCKS UNLIMITED AND PARTNERS CONSERVE RIVER HABITAT NEAR STATE WILDLIFE AREAS

Ducks Unlimited and partners protected 80 acres along the South Platte River. The property, near Kersey, is owned by the Mallard Land & Cattle Company. The riparian river bottom tract has a half-mile stretch of riverfront with sandbars and 37 acres of wetlands, including warm water sloughs and seasonal wetlands.

"This is an important property to protect because of its location and vicinity to two state wildlife areas, Nakagawa and Centennial Valley,"

said Martin Grenier, DU Colorado conservation programs manager. "The easement contributes directly to the objectives of DU's Heartland Heritage and Habitat initiative to conserve habitat for migrating waterfowl along the river and it protects open spaces in Colorado."

Conserving private lands next to public areas provides a bigger return on DU's investment because it builds larger, more diverse habitat complexes. This habitat diversity leads to greater use by

waterfowl and supports more consistent hunting opportunities on the public areas.

The project is a partnership between the Mallard Land & Cattle Company, DU, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and Great Outdoors Colorado, with additional funding from a North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant. The Platte River Partnership NAWCA grant is conserving and enhancing habitat along the South Platte River.

DU CREATES NESTING HABITAT IN NORTH PARK

Ducks Unlimited finished a project that was one of the oldest on the books in Colorado. After more than a decade's march through water rights adjudication, permitting and construction, the Lake Creek project created a wetland for breeding waterfowl on State Land Board (SLB) land near Lake John in North Park. Working with SLB, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and the North American Wetlands Conservation Council, DU spent \$140,000 to build a dike and a large water-control structure to enhance 29 acres of breeding waterfowl habitat along Lake Creek.

The Lake Creek project is near the Lake John State Wildlife Area that recorded the highest density of nesting birds in the region. Ducks Unlimited hopes patterning Lake Creek's wetland management after this successful wildlife area will bring the same nesting results. The wetland will be managed by Colorado Parks and Wildlife and will be open for public hunting.



Structure at Lake Creek enhances water delivery.

DUCKS UNLIMITED TO COMPLETE PREWITT STATE WILDLIFE AREA PROJECT

Ducks Unlimited will complete a three-year project on the Prewitt Reservoir State Wildlife Area (SWA) this year. The area is northeast of Denver, along the South Platte River. The project is in an area of the reservoir open to public hunting. The goal of the Prewitt project is to enhance more than 450 acres of habitat, including cattail-choked marshes below the reservoir's dam and wetlands near its shore.

Last year, DU installed a water-control structure on a marsh below the reservoir's dam. This summer, DU will install a series of terraces near the inlet to the reservoir. The structure will allow Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) managers to control water levels and create more open water in the marsh, improving spring habitat conditions and hunting opportunities.

"If you think of the reservoir as a big bath tub, you have to fill the bottom of the tub before the water can get up

to the top where the best duck habitat is. We are putting the terraces in at the top of the reservoir so we don't have to add as much water to flood habitat where wildlife can use it," said Matt Reddy, DU regional biologist.

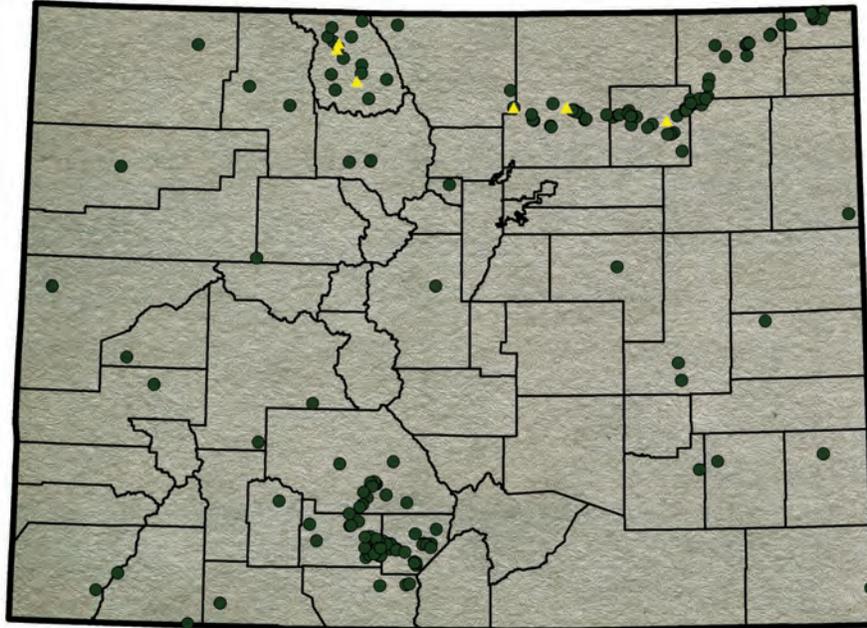
The project is part of DU's Prewitt Reservoir Partnership with a goal to restore all of the waterfowl habitats in reach of the reservoir. To date, the partnership has spent more than \$1 million conserving nearly 5,000 acres of habitat associated with Prewitt. Partners include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the North American Wetlands Conservation Council, the Playa Lakes Joint Venture, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, the Colorado Water Conservation Board, Great Outdoors Colorado, Colorado Open Lands, and the Prewitt Reservoir Company.

ducks unlimited
CO PROJECTS
1989-2016

● Completed projects - 1989-2015

▲ 2016 Completed projects

Note: Project points may represent more than one project.



Accomplishments*

102,369 Acres protected, restored or enhanced • \$32,329,619 invested

*Based on numbers available 01/01/17

COLORADO
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our mission

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