

### NEW LIFE AT BLACKWATER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Dorchester County

Ducks Unlimited and several partners in 2019 completed a handful of projects at Blackwater, one of the most biodiverse and ecologically valuable areas in the state. Partners restored two impoundments, totaling 50 acres of new emergent, moist soils habitat. DU also installed high-capacity pumps to improve water level management on 200 acres of managed moist soil habitat. Despite only comprising about 800 acres of the refuge's total 30,000 acres, managed moist soil and agricultural habitat support more than 50 percent of the total migratory waterfowl present at the refuge. These projects improve resource availability by increasing the amount of moist soil wetland habitat available.



### DELAWARE WATERSHED CONSERVATION FUND GRANT RECEIVED

Kent, Sussex Counties

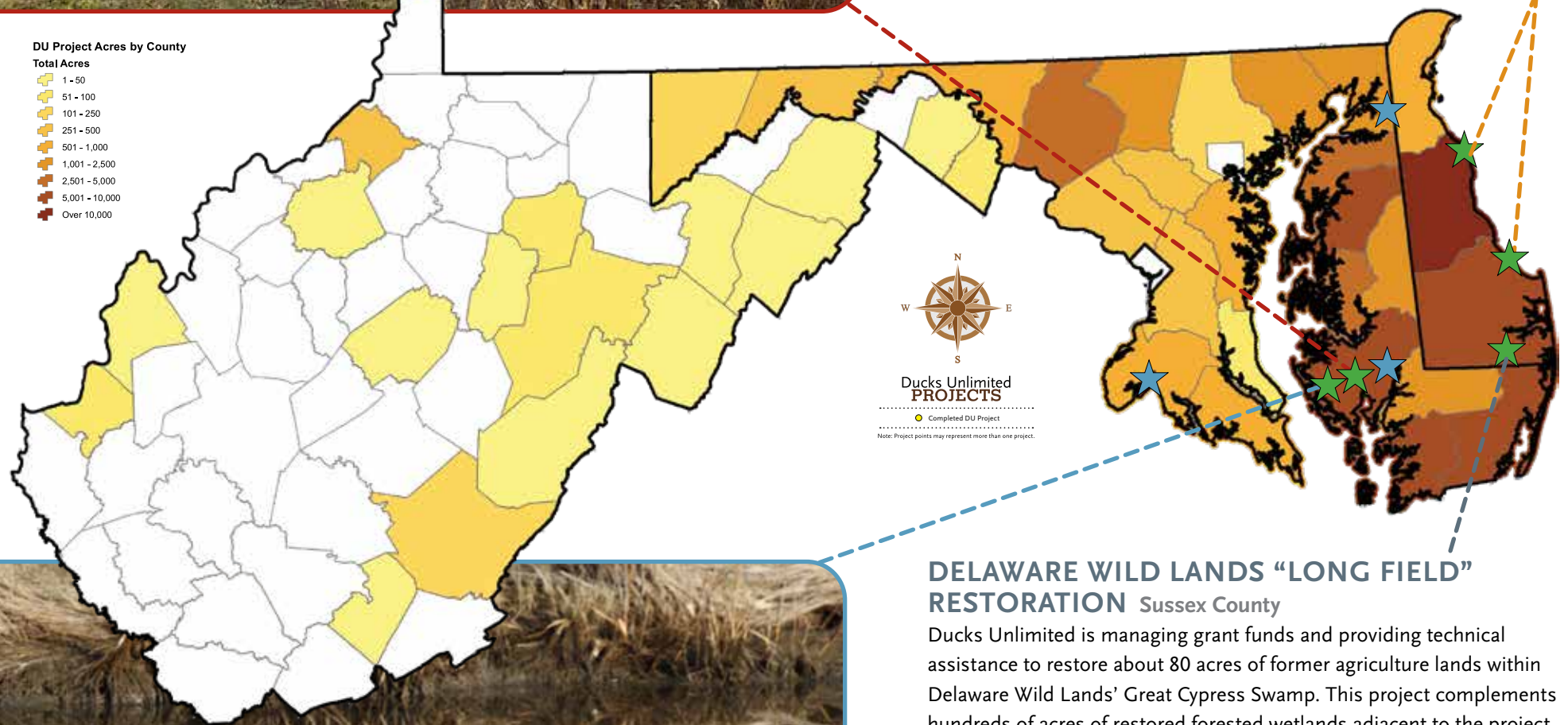
DU received a \$100,000 grant in fall 2019 from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund, which in conjunction with gifts from Axalta and other private donors will support restoring managed moist soil wetland habitat at Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge and seasonal emergent wetlands at Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge. Partners are still developing project details, with an estimated 100 acres to be improved.



#### DU Project Acres by County

##### Total Acres

- 1 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- 501 - 1,000
- 1,001 - 2,500
- 2,501 - 5,000
- 5,001 - 10,000
- Over 10,000



### DELAWARE WILD LANDS "LONG FIELD" RESTORATION

Sussex County

Ducks Unlimited is managing grant funds and providing technical assistance to restore about 80 acres of former agriculture lands within Delaware Wild Lands' Great Cypress Swamp. This project complements hundreds of acres of restored forested wetlands adjacent to the project site which DU restored previously with Delaware Wild Lands. Partners include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and private donors.



### MARYLAND LAND PROTECTED

Eastern Shore

Ducks Unlimited and partners secured a \$1 million North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant to permanently protect, via conservation easements, more than 1,400 acres on Maryland's Eastern Shore. The partnership officially completed its first easement in fall 2019, protecting a 420-acre parcel in Dorchester County. The partnership anticipates closing on a second tract in 2020. Partners include the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, Lower Shore Land Trust, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Environmental Trust, U.S. Navy Environmental Protection Integration Program and private donors.



Photo courtesy of Delaware Wild Lands



**★ DU, MARYLAND MAKE CHESAPEAKE BAY MORE APPEALING TO WATERFOWL**  
*Partnership is increasing wetlands at three wildlife management areas on both sides of the bay*

Chesapeake Bay's shorelines and wetlands have lured waterfowl along the Atlantic Flyway for centuries. Dabblers, divers and geese use these waterways for migration and breeding in legendary numbers.

But people are getting in the way. The human population in the Chesapeake Bay region has doubled since 1950 to more than 18 million. Human development wiped out wetland habitats and created poor water quality in the bay.

Ducks Unlimited and the state of Maryland are combining expertise and resources to increase wetlands at three wildlife management areas (WMA) on both sides of the bay: LeCompte WMA in Dorchester County, Old Bohemia WMA in Cecil County and Cedar Point WMA in Charles County. At all three sites, Ducks Unlimited and the state are reverting former agricultural land back to a more natural wetland state.

Population density makes conserving new land difficult, and a strong partnership with the state is crucial for waterfowl habitat conservation, said Jake McPherson, Ducks Unlimited regional biologist in Maryland.

"Ducks Unlimited doesn't own land, so to do conservation, we have to work with somebody," McPherson said. "There are tens of thousands of acres of state-owned land in Maryland, so partnering with the state makes sense. State lands are open to public access so these conservation projects can be enjoyed by everyone."

Ducks Unlimited and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Wildlife and Heritage Service are restoring 23 acres of former agriculture land at the three WMAs.

"The restorations will really help increase habitat diversity and wildlife diversity for hunting and bird watching, while improving water quality coming off the land into the tributaries of Chesapeake Bay," said Bill Harvey, Wildlife and Heritage Service game bird section leader.

"Ducks Unlimited has been incredibly valuable and has provided technical services and funding to make these things happen."

Dorchester Soil Conservation District was a partner on the LeCompte project, having performed initial survey and design work. The LeCompte project is complete. The other two sites will be done in 2020.



**Maryland**

- In addition to public land projects, Ducks Unlimited has three private lands projects slated for 2020 funded by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund. This is a continuation of DU private lands efforts in Maryland over the last decade.

**West Virginia**

- Ducks Unlimited is sharing the cost of a wetland restoration design with the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources. The proposed project, located at Meadow River Wildlife Management Area in Greenbrier County, is expected to restore about 12 acres of fallow land to emergent freshwater wetlands. Final designs are expected to be completed in 2020 with construction in a future year, upon successfully securing necessary funds.

**MID-ATLANTIC NUMBERS**

**2019**

- 10 projects
- 737 acres conserved
- \$1,306,110 invested

**HISTORICAL**

- 310 projects
- 77,869 acres conserved
- \$17,934,377 invested

For more information visit [www.ducks.org](http://www.ducks.org)



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

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT US ONLINE AT [WWW.DUCKS.ORG](http://WWW.DUCKS.ORG)



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