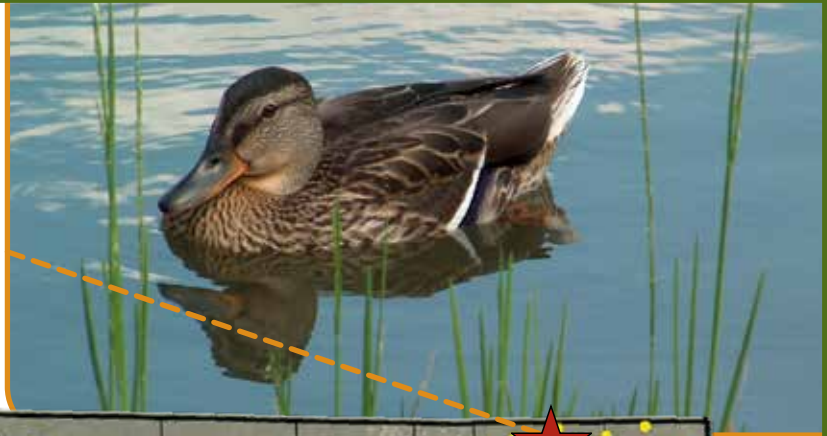


OVER 160 ACRES CONSERVED AT HACKMATACK **McHenry County**

The Friends of Hackmatack Wetland Conservation North American Wetlands Conservation Act Project acquired 19 acres and restored 142 acres of wetlands and associated upland habitats within Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge was established in 2012 to conserve important breeding habitat for many wetland and grassland nesting birds, including several species of waterfowl. Restored and enhanced wetlands will lead to greater habitat diversity, more desired wetland management capabilities, enhanced water quality and more public recreational opportunity. Partners include Openlands, The Land Conservancy of McHenry County, Nippersink Watershed Association, McHenry County Conservation District and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



POPULAR COLEMAN LAKE ENHANCED **Putnam County**

Ducks Unlimited and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources will enhance a popular recreational spot at Donnelley/DePue State Fish and Wildlife Area near Hennepin. This project will enhance more than 200 acres of wetlands within the Coleman Lake Unit waterfowl hunting area along the east side of the Illinois River. New infrastructure will allow managers to produce vegetation for migration, breeding and brood-rearing habitat important for waterfowl and a variety of other wildlife species. Donnelley/DePue's proximity to population centers offers excellent opportunities for hunters, birders and other recreational activities. The project is targeted for completion later this year.



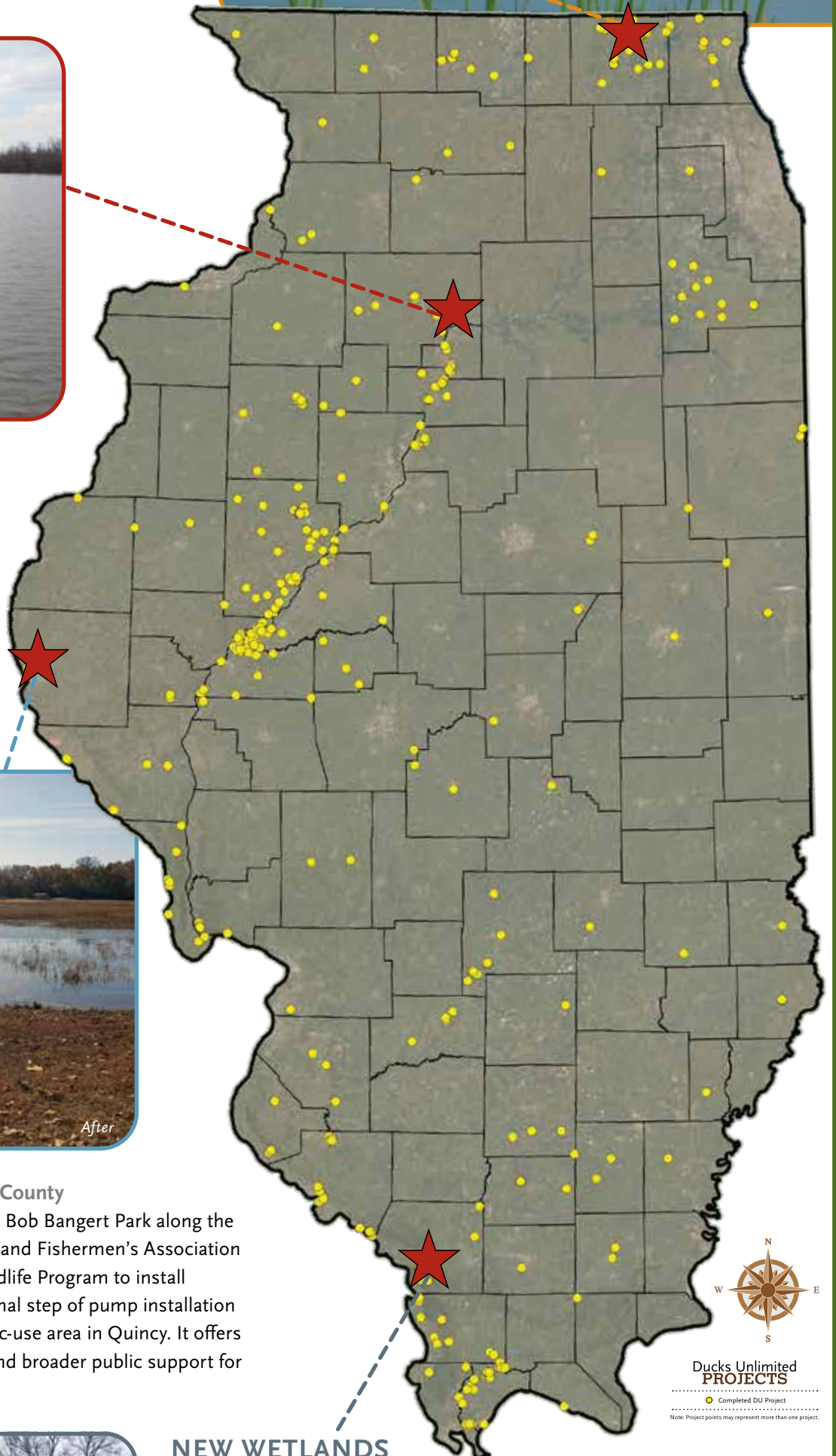
RESTORED HABITAT AT BOB BANGERT PARK **Adams County**

Ducks Unlimited helped restore 20 acres of emergent and forested wetlands at Bob Bangert Park along the Mississippi River and just south of Quincy Bay. The Mississippi Valley Hunters and Fishermen's Association partnered with the U.S. Fish and the Wildlife Service Partner's for Fish and Wildlife Program to install infrastructure to restore productive habitat. DU provided assistance with the final step of pump installation to further manage healthy water levels. Bob Bangert Park is an important public-use area in Quincy. It offers an excellent opportunity to increase wetland-related youth education and expand broader public support for wetlands conservation.



NEW WETLANDS FOR SHAWNEE NATIONAL FOREST **Jackson County**

DU, the National Wild Turkey Federation and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) partnered to install a new well, berms and water control structure into Greentree Units 27 and 28 at Oakwood Bottoms, giving the USFS the tools to properly manage water levels for over 320 acres of moist soil and forested wetlands. The USFS manages Oakwood Bottoms to mimic natural floodplain hydrology that cannot otherwise be achieved naturally. The restored and enhanced wetlands will lead to more recreational opportunities including hunting and photography, along with improved bottomland hardwood health.



MAJOR ILLINOIS RIVER VALLEY PROGRAM LAUNCHED

Illinois River Valley wetlands are critical for birds, recreation and water quality, and Ducks Unlimited is leading a \$5 million conservation effort to safeguard them from further human development and climate change.

The Conserving the Illinois River Legacy program combines support from more than a half-dozen partners and federal funding to protect, enhance or restore 13,000 acres across 19 counties bordering the middle and lower stretches of the river. The area is comprised of large backwater lakes, expansive marshes and bottomland hardwood forests.

“It’s a major corridor for birds funneling between northern breeding grounds and southern wintering grounds,” said Michael Sertle, Ducks Unlimited regional biologist. “The Illinois River Valley provides critical habitat for waterfowl and other migratory birds the food and rest they need to complete their journeys.”

The region’s wetlands are popular with outdoors enthusiasts, alleviate downstream flooding and help remove pollutants from rainwater runoff. The Illinois River is rich in waterfowling tradition. It has a history of extensive market hunting in the early 1900s to provide food to large cities, has some of the oldest waterfowl hunting clubs in the United States, is home to notable decoy carvers and waterfowl call makers and was the spot for some of the earliest waterfowl research.

But the region has been heavily influenced by human activities.

“During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the area was leveed, ditched, drained, timbered, cleared, burned, farmed and grazed,” Sertle said.

About 90 percent of Illinois’ historic wetlands have been lost and 44 percent of the Illinois River’s 426,000-acre floodplain has been drained for agriculture. Climate change, which causes fluctuating rainfall and changes in flooding and native vegetation, adds another threat.

The Conserving the Illinois River Legacy program will protect 1,522 acres of wetlands, restore water to nearly 19 acres of drained wetlands, and enhance over 11,500 acres of existing degraded wetlands. The project sites will be open to a variety of different public recreational uses, such as waterfowl hunting, fishing, and boating.

The project is funded through a \$1 million North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant with \$4.1 million in matching and non-matching support from Ducks Unlimited, Wetlands America Trust (WAT), The Nature Conservancy, The Wetlands Initiative, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Peoria Park District, Friends of Sanganois, Illinois River Valley Conservation Group, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, with support from the Illinois Natural History Survey’s Forbes Biological Station. Additional DU and WAT funding support was provided by both the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation and Grand Victoria Foundation.



Anderson Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area
© Illinois Natural History Survey

Northern Illinois

- Ducks Unlimited will continue its partnership on acquisition and restoration projects at Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge.
- New partnerships and projects are being identified with the Forest Preserve District of Kane County.

- Potential IDNR projects are under review at Big Bend State Fish, Wildlife Area Black Crown Marsh State Natural Area and Redwing Slough/Deer Lake Management Area.
- Expansion of private lands habitat partnership with Pheasants Forever and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Partners for Fish and Wildlife program across northern Illinois.

Central Illinois

- A \$250,000 Illinois State Habitat grant for DU and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Partners for Fish and Wildlife program to complete 170 acres of private lands habitat in the upper Mississippi River and Illinois River floodplains is under way.
- Begin the implementation of Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge restoration and enhancement of 550 acres.

- Enhance and restore up to 60 acres within Raskey Slough at Horseshoe Lake State Park
- Review potential projects at IDNR SFWAs, Delair National Wildlife Refuge and multiple reservoir lakes.

Southern Illinois

- Begin implementation of 107-acre Big Muddy Units restoration.
- Begin implementation of 80-acre Owens restoration.
- Donate 57-acre Brooks Tract to Shawnee National Forest.

- Review potential acquisition and restoration projects with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Illinois Department of Natural Resources along the Cache River.
- Review potential projects on other IDNR and USFS properties.

ILLINOIS BY THE NUMBERS

2019

- 14 projects
- 3,204 acres conserved
- \$1.1 million invested

HISTORICAL

- 511 projects
- 66,210 acres conserved
- \$23.7 million invested

For more information visit www.ducks.org/illinois



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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/ILLINOIS



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