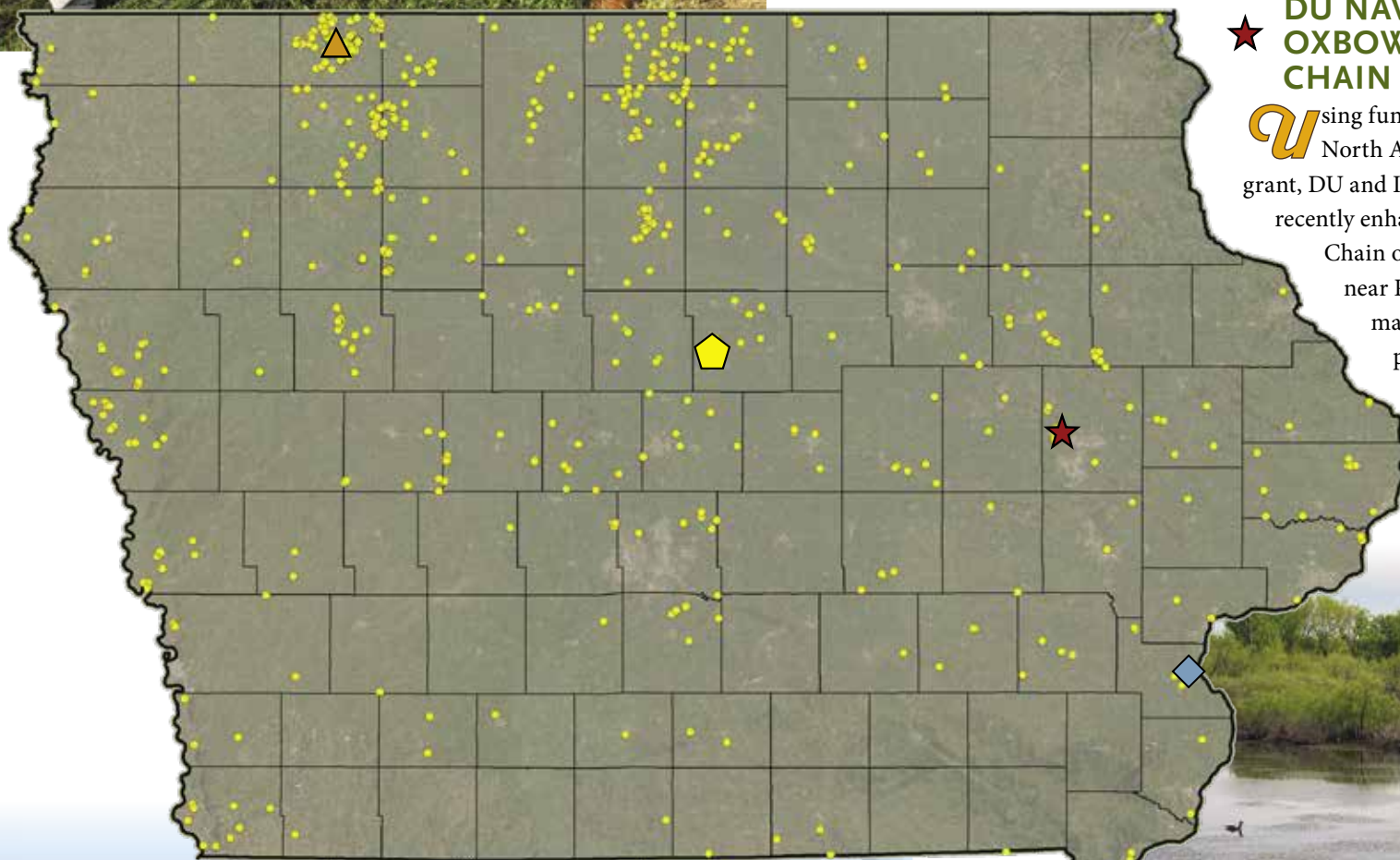




### ▲ ANDREA WAITT CARLTON FOUNDATION COMMITTS \$750,000 TO DU

The Andrea Waitt Carlton Family Foundation committed \$750,000 to Ducks Unlimited to help protect nearly 160 acres of land for wildlife habitat, water quality and public recreation in Dickinson County. Ducks Unlimited will use the gift to help fund a \$1.2 million conservation project to acquire a 159-acre former farm from the Reed family east of Okoboji in the heart of the Iowa Great Lakes region. The land will be turned over to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for the establishment of a new wildlife management area. The Reed property contains a mix of prairies and wetlands. Human development in Iowa drained more than 90% of the state's wetlands and protecting this land from future development and restoring wetlands and grasslands is a priority for Ducks Unlimited.



### ★ DU NAWCA GRANT FUNDS OXBOW RESTORATION ON CHAIN OF LAKES WMA

Using funds provided by the Cedar River Basin North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant, DU and Iowa Department of Natural Resources recently enhanced a 90-acre oxbow wetland on Chain of Lakes Wildlife Management Area near Palo. The project installed new water-management structures and repaired previous flood damaged to improve habitat within the Cedar River floodplain. This mix of forested and emergent marsh will provide excellent habitat for waterfowl migrating through east-central Iowa.



### ◆ AG SEC. PERDUE, IOWA GOV. REYNOLDS TOUR DU, PURINA PROJECT

A successful water quality and wetland conservation project completed through a partnership between Ducks Unlimited, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and Nestlé Purina PetCare Company played host to several federal and state leaders in September 2020 north of Des Moines, Iowa. U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds, U.S. Senator Joni Ernst, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig and others toured the 56-acre farmstead of Heath Stolee in Radcliffe, Iowa. Also taking part were Ducks Unlimited CEO Adam Putnam and Purina President Nina Leigh Krueger. Ducks Unlimited, with funding support from Purina, worked with Stolee to enhance his working farm to benefit water quality. The project includes the establishment of a 56-acre conservation easement and includes a 16-acre wetland. This wetland will reduce nitrogen from 1,893 acres of agricultural land, and over its design life, the wetland will remove more than 1,744 tons of nitrogen from the drainage tile in the watershed.

### ◆ KLUM LAKE RESTORATION COMPLETED

Ducks Unlimited's Big Rivers Initiative in Iowa took a major step forward recently with the completion of the Klum Lake Enhancement project near Wapello. This project, with funding assistance from Iowa Department of Natural Resources and North American Wetlands Conservation Act, replaced a dilapidated water-control structure on the outlet of the lake and greatly improved the DNR's ability to manage wetland habitat. Over the years, high water levels had caused excessive growth of thick stands of cattails and loss of valuable buck-brush habitat. The project will allow DNR to provide better foraging habitat for waterfowl to attract migrating waterfowl like mallards and gadwalls.





**SIGNIFICANT PARTNERSHIP WILL INCREASE IOWA WETLANDS**

**A** dynamic partnership between the state of Iowa, forward-thinking landowners and conservation organizations including Ducks Unlimited aims to improve water quality across the state for residents and wildlife.

Iowa has lost 90% of its historical wetlands. This loss has led to 951 flood-related disaster declarations over the last 30 years. More than 50% of Iowa’s waters ranked “poor” and 500 waterways are “impaired.” Over the last two decades, Iowa has lost more than 1.6 million acres of habitat suitable for pheasants and other small game.



*Iowa landowner Heath Stolee shows U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue his farm operations in September 2020.*

The state of Iowa has a plan to improve water quality, and Ducks Unlimited is taking a large role in it.

Iowa has developed a Nutrient Reduction Strategy (NRS) goal of 45% reduction in nitrogen entering waterways. To achieve that, the state will require thousands of wetlands capable of treating runoff from up to 10 million acres of agricultural lands. Research shows that properly positioned and designed wetlands can remove an average of 52% of nitrogen and 85% of phosphorus from tile runoff water.

To help deliver those wetlands, Ducks Unlimited and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) entered into a three-year, \$1.6 million agreement to identify, plan and design wetlands across the Prairie Pothole Region. The agreement builds on years of successful conservation actions by DU.

“By partnering with us, they use our experience in delivering wetlands to speed up the process. It means more wetlands on the ground, faster,” said Mike Shannon, DU regional biologist in Iowa.

The goals are lofty, as are the resources dedicated to reach them. Because the majority of new wetlands will exist on private land, DU will hire a conservation specialist who will work with agriculture producers to enroll them in Water Quality Initiative or Farm Bill programs. These programs pay landowners to restore wetlands to parts of their property.

The partnership anticipates enrolling 10 farmers this year followed by 30 in each of the following years.

“The landowners doing this are traditional ag producers. They understand that wetland conservation is compatible with sustainable agriculture,” Shannon said.

DU’s Geographic Information System staff will identify potential wetland sites in three priority watersheds (North Raccoon, Boone, South Skunk). The conservation specialist will guide the landowner throughout the entire wetland planning and development process through completion of the design and permitting process.

Ducks Unlimited’s engineering staff plans to complete a minimum of six wetland design plans this year, followed by a minimum of eight design plans in each subsequent years.

Watersheds being targeted through the new IDALS partnership are shown in blue, most of which is contained within the Prairie Pothole Region (in yellow).

This new partnership is the latest effort from Ducks Unlimited to improve wetlands across Iowa’s landscape.

In 2011, DU entered into an agreement with Natural Resources Conservation Service to deliver all Wetland Reserve Program restorations in the central and western portions of the state. Over the four-year agreement, DU delivered 94 projects totaling almost \$6.7 million.

Since 2017, Ducks Unlimited and corporate partners Wells-Fargo and Nestle Purina have contributed \$190,000 to wetland projects, with an additional \$250,000 committed by Purina and Microsoft over the next two years.

What makes this new IDALS partnership unique is where, and how, the conservation will happen.

“This is an opportunity to do a lot of wetland restoration work in areas and with partners we have not worked with before,” Shannon said. “A lot of our previous work was on public lands, shallow lakes and larger wetlands. This adds a different wetland component to the landscape.”



***Iowa by the Numbers***

**2020**

- 1,447 acres conserved
- \$1.4 million invested

**HISTORICAL**

- 80,444 acres conserved
- \$33.2 million invested



***Iowa Conservation Staff***

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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/IOWA](http://WWW.DUCKS.ORG/IOWA)

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