

### GREAT LAKES/ATLANTIC REGION

### LIVING LAKES INITIATIVE

#### ★ WATER QUALITY WETLANDS PARTNERSHIP

In partnership with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS), DU continues to restore wetlands across Iowa's Prairie Pothole landscape. In 2021, DU, with funding assistance from Microsoft, helped cost-share construction of three new wetlands in Buena Vista and Pocahontas Counties. In addition to restoring 120 acres of habitat for waterfowl, pollinators and ground nesting birds, these three wetlands will treat runoff from over 1,660 acres of farm ground, removing an estimated 17,000 lbs of nitrates annually.



#### ★ BLACKHAWK LAKE FISH BARRIER

**B**lackhawk Lake is the southern-most glacially formed lake in Iowa. This 922-acre lake is a popular recreation area, attracting boaters, anglers and waterfowlers from across the state. Despite its popularity, the lake has experienced degraded water

quality partially due to non-native common carp, which significantly contribute to water quality issues. Over the years, Iowa DNR has spent considerable effort to improve water quality with limited success.

To help Iowa DNR, Ducks Unlimited designed and constructed a new fish barrier to prevent carp from migrating between the main body of the lake and the large marsh known as Provost Bay. The barrier will prevent carp from entering the marsh to spawn, decreasing the population. The design also included a pump system that will allow DNR managers to adjust water levels as needed.

This \$900,000 project was made possible by contributions from DU, Iowa DNR Lake Restoration Program, NAWCA, the City of Lake View, and the Blackhawk Lake Protective Association.

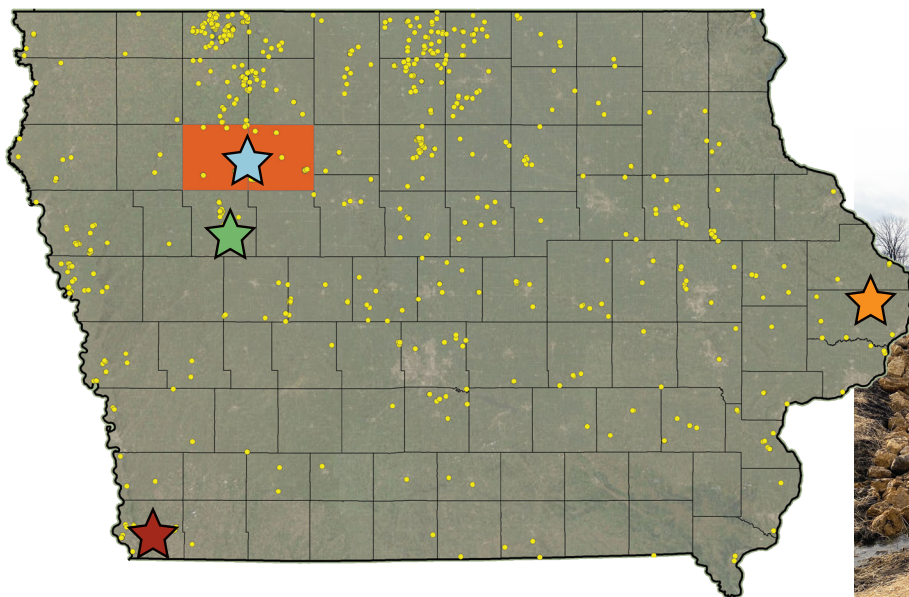
#### ★ GOOSE LAKE WETLAND ENHANCEMENT

**G**oose Lake is a 900-acre semi-permanent wetland owned and managed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in Clinton County. This area provides important habitat for migrating and breeding waterbirds in eastern Iowa. Historically, the lake was a large semi-permanent basin, but persistent drainage efforts have significantly altered natural hydrology over the years.

Working with Iowa DNR, DU designed and constructed a new, more efficient water control structure to replace the existing inadequate structure.

The installation of a new structure will allow DNR managers to mimic natural hydrologic regimes and provide improved habitat for migrating waterbirds. The project will enhance approximately 400 acres in the north unit of the lake.

Project funding was provided by DU, Iowa DNR and the North American Wetlands Conservation Act.



## ★ RIVERTON WETLAND ENHANCEMENT – NORTH REFUGE

**R**iverton Wildlife Management Area in southwest Iowa has long been one of the top waterfowling destinations in Iowa. This intensively managed 3,990-acre public wetland attracts tens of thousands of migrating ducks every year.

Over the years, the infrastructure necessary to manage this wetland has suffered from repeated catastrophic flooding and siltation. Ducks Unlimited and Iowa DNR have initiated a multiphase project to improve management capabilities and attract more waterfowl.

The project's first phase is improving water management within the North Refuge. This unit relies on a large water control structure and a series of ditches to move water to and from the West Nishnabota River. The current structure has been damaged by flooding and is in danger of failure.

Repeated flooding has filled most ditches and swales within the refuge with sediment, limiting the wetlands' ability to drain and fill. Prolonged poor water management capability has resulted in a spread of unwanted species like willows, river bullrush and cattail, resulting in a decline in food-producing plants like millet and smartweed.

To alleviate these problems, DU excavated nearly 14,000 feet of swales in the North Refuge, allowing managers to flood the wetlands in the fall and dry them out during the growing season. Phase one of the project was completed in August 2021. Phase two includes installing a new water control structure at the outlet to the West Nishnabota River. Construction of this structure will begin in summer 2022.



## WHAT'S NEXT

**P**rograms in Iowa continue to grow, and we expect 2022 to be very busy for our Living Lake Initiative. We will complete construction on the Garlock Slough and West Swan Lake projects in northern Iowa. DU engineers will also be wrapping up designs for Eagle Lake in Hancock County and Lily Lake in Dickinson County, with construction planned for 2023. Iowa Big River Initiative will be busy as well. In Louisa County, we will improve the outlet structure at Odessa Wildlife Area and begin survey and design work for enhancements on Port Louisa NWR and Wapello Bottoms Wildlife Area. In Fremont County, we will complete the installation of a new outlet structure on the Riverton Wildlife Area.

## Iowa by the Numbers

### 2021

- 12 projects
- 2,232 acres conserved
- \$2 million invested

### HISTORICAL

- 82,676 acres conserved
- \$35.2 million invested

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

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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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