

LITTLE SWAN LAKE HAS BIG POTENTIAL FOR DUCKS

In early 2017, the Little Swan Lake enhancement project will install a new water management system and carp barrier which transformed this shallow lake from open, turbid water to healthy, clean water with abundant natural wetland vegetation. This project will provide critical breeding and migration habitat for waterfowl and



other wetland-dependent wildlife, as well as important recreational, water quality and societal benefits to Iowa residents. The project was a cooperative effort between Ducks Unlimited, several conservation organizations and numerous private landowners.

RICE LAKE REVIVED FOR WATERFOWL, FISH

Rice Lake in Worth and Winnebago counties in northern Iowa, is Ducks Unlimited's most recently completed Living Lakes Initiative project in Iowa. DU worked with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to enhance the 1,020-acre lake. DNR lake managers can now control water depth to mimic natural high- and low-water cycles, promoting a more natural waterfowl and fish habitat. Prior to the project, this water was an open, wind-swept lake that offered limited habitat for waterfowl. Today, the lake supports large numbers of migrating waterfowl and a healthy native fish population.



**Ducks Unlimited
PROJECTS**

● Completed ★ Featured

Note: Project points may represent more than one project.

WILDLIFE, HUNTERS TO BENEFIT FROM 160-ACRE PRAIRIE RESTORATION

Ducks Unlimited in 2016 helped acquire a 160-acre tract of land in Plymouth County that will be restored to prairie habitat. Once restoration is complete, the land will be open to the public for hunting. This new public land was made possible by a 2012 gift to DU from the estate of Shirley Vannorsdel, a lifelong resident of northwest Iowa. DU partnered with the Plymouth County Conservation Foundation and Pheasants Forever to acquire the land near the town of Westfield.



WRIGHT COUNTY WETLANDS CREATED THROUGH CREP

The Iowa Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) provides incentives to landowners who voluntarily establish wetlands for water quality improvement in the heavily tile-drained regions of Iowa. The goal is to restore wetlands and riparian habitat to reduce nitrogen and movement of other agricultural chemicals from croplands into streams and rivers. In addition to improving water quality, these wetlands provide wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities. In 2016, DU partnered with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship to help fund a new CREP wetland in Wright County. This project consisted of a 57-acre CREP grassland easement and construction of a 13-acre wetland. The wetland collects agricultural runoff water from about 1,023 acres with the goal of removing excess nutrients. Similar projects have been shown to remove 40 to 75 percent of the nitrates from agricultural runoff.





Iowa is a state rich in waterfowl history battling to protect what remains of its vital waterfowl habitat.

The state is an important transition zone from the breeding areas of the Prairie Pothole Region to the major migration areas. The northern reaches of the state are in breeding grounds rich in bird life in spring and summer. In fall, birds can be found in the southeast as they transition to wintering areas.

But Iowa has lost nearly 90 percent of its historical wetlands to development and agriculture. Ducks Unlimited is working on two major initiatives in Iowa, the Living Lakes Initiative and the Big Rivers Initiative.

The vision of the Living Lakes Initiative is to enhance, restore and protect managed shallow lakes and wetlands from central Iowa through northern Minnesota to provide high-quality aquatic food and habitat resources for migrating and breeding waterfowl.

Located in the heart of the Mississippi River and its major tributaries, the Big Rivers Initiative focuses on the restoration, enhancement and protection of wetlands used by millions of waterfowl as they migrate between wintering and breeding grounds each year.

LOOKING AHEAD, FUNDING THE TRUST

Ducks Unlimited is using donor support and help from conservation partners to restore Iowa wetland and upland habitats. DU in 2017 will continue work on 12 Living Lakes and nine Big Rivers projects. These include an innovative wetland project in Dickinson County which will send polluted rainwater runoff through a managed wetland to improve water quality, and Cone Marsh in southeast Iowa, enhancing portions of the 500-acre lake.

More work can be done, and with the support of Ducks Unlimited members and fellow Iowans, a solution is nearly ready.

HELP FUND THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND OUTDOOR RECREATION TRUST FUND

The Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund is a permanent, protected funding source approved by voters in 2010 to conserve Iowa's natural resources.

The trust ensures productive agricultural soils, thriving wildlife habitats and clean water for generations to come. This is Ducks Unlimited's top state priority nationwide.

Even though the trust has been created, the legislature has not passed the 3/8 of one cent sales tax to fund it. Funding the trust would provide \$180 million annually, with several million for wetlands and waterfowl conservation.

Contact your legislators today! Tell them to support funding the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Fund. For details, including how to reach your lawmaker and what to tell them, visit www.ducks.org/iowa.



A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Ducks Unlimited is celebrating our 80th anniversary in 2017. As an organization, we can trumpet our accomplishments knowing how strongly equipped we are to improve the health of wetlands across North America for the next generation.

The 21-state Great Lakes/Atlantic Region is a diverse landscape of habitats ranging from prairie potholes in the upper Midwest to coastal estuaries in the Atlantic Flyway, with Great Lakes marshes and riverine wetlands in between. Our region had a tremendous impact in 2016. We used private donations and public funds to invest \$29,049,039 on conservation projects. That strong support enabled our biologists and engineers to deliver focused, effective habitat conservation on 15,616 acres of wetlands.

Iowa is vital to the goals of our region and the country. The entire team in Iowa, including our volunteers, fundraising staff and conservation staff, has developed a winning strategy that helps waterfowl and anyone who enjoys clean water.

The work you see in this report is a snapshot of the conservation Ducks Unlimited achieves every day. We need and appreciate your support, as we build on this success for the next 80 years.

David Brakhage, GLARO Director of Operations

IOWA: BY THE NUMBERS

2016

- \$1,411,084 invested
- 1,237 acres conserved
- 3 projects completed

HISTORICAL

- 74,951 total acres conserved
- \$26,863,191 invested

For more information visit www.ducks.org/iowa

MEET YOUR IOWA CONSERVATION STAFF



Iowa Regional Biologist **Mike Shannon** has spent 19 years with Ducks Unlimited. He started in Colorado before working in eastern Oregon for 10 years and Iowa for the last five. A native of Missouri, Shannon earned a bachelor's degree in wildlife management from the University of Missouri. In his free time, he enjoys being outdoors, hunting, fishing and birdwatching.

Contact: 541.891.5047 • mshannon@ducks.org

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



GREAT LAKES & ATLANTIC REGION

1220 Eisenhower Place, Ann Arbor, MI 48108
734.623.2000 (Phone) • 734.623.2035 (Fax)