Another strong year closed on Ducks Unlimited’s conservation programs in Kansas and a new year lies ahead. With the support of our volunteers and strong partnerships, we brought in additional dollars from a North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant and began private lands delivery through our Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant.

We have undertaken a 50-acre wetland renovation on two sites at Byron Walker Wildlife Area (WA) in Kingman County. New berms and water-control structures will improve the manager’s ability to manipulate water levels for ideal wetland conditions. DU also closed on a nearly 500-acre acquisition that abuts the WA and will be transferred to Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWP). This property includes more than a mile of the south fork of the Ninnescah River with riparian wetlands, native prairie and cropland.

DU is installing a new pump on the banks of the Delaware River at Perry WA. It will service Rechert Marsh and Northwest Marsh with plans to add a pipeline to Headquarters Marsh. The pump can supply water to 280 acres of wetlands for reliable migration habitat.

This is a great example of what a dedicated group of sportspeople can accomplish as this project came about through financial support of our local DU volunteers. Funds were leveraged with various grant sources to complete the project this spring.

At McPherson Valley Wetlands WA, Ducks Unlimited worked on a 90-acre renovation that added wetland and upland habitat. Nearby, we designed another 90-acre wetland project that is in the permitting phase with construction planned for this summer.

Becoming too many to list, but too important not to mention, wetland restorations and improvements are underway at Cheyenne Bottoms, Quivira National Wildlife Refuge and Jamestown WA. At the Kanopolis Reservoir, we are assisting KDWPT and the Army Corps of Engineers along the Smoky Hill River to add several hundred new wetland acres. In Cherokee County, we assisted with the acquisition of nearly 700 acres of public lands with more planned using NAWCA funding. Restorations are slated at several other areas including Clinton WA, Kirwin National Wildlife Refuge, the Great Plains Nature Center in Wichita, Gurlie Marsh WA, and secondary phases at Nenosha WA and Talmo WA.

Our program also includes dozens of private lands projects in various stages of construction and delivery across the state. With the variety of projects winding down or being completed, the DU team continues to move the needle in the right direction for wildlife and their habitats in the Sunflower State.

For information on DU’s conservation programs:
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For information on becoming a Major Sponsor:
Kirk Davidson, Director of Development - CO, KS
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For information on event fundraising:
David Paul, State Chairman - KS
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John Ritchey, Senior Regional Director - Central KS
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Josh Williams, Regional Director - West KS
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Chris Young, Regional Director - East KS
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For information on event fundraising:

Playa Lakes Region - Playa lakes are small, depressional wetlands in western Kansas that provide critical migration habitat for waterfowl. These wetlands also filter and recharge the water supply in the Ogallala aquifer.

*Based on numbers available 01/01/18

STATE CONTACTS
Ducks Unlimited and partner producers from Kansas met in Washington, D.C. with the Kansas congressional delegation to talk about conservation priorities in the upcoming Farm Bill.

Andy Hineman from Scott City, Alicia Allen from Sharon Springs, and Mark E. Smith from Wallace are producers from western Kansas who take part in voluntary, incentive-based conservation programs funded through the Farm Bill. The group met with Congressman Roger Marshall (R-KS-01), Congressman Ron Estes (R-KS-04), Congresswoman Lynn Jenkins (R-KS-02) and Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS).

DUC works with producers across Kansas to educate them on Farm Bill programs and assists them with the signup process.

"Farm Bill programs like the Agriculture Conservation Easement Program, Conservation Reserve Program and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program are vital for our nation's wildlife and their habitats, as well as for our agricultural communities," said Michael Findlay, DUC government affairs representative on state policy.

"It is critical that legislators hear from their constituents as the time to renew the Farm Bill approaches. These are the people using and benefiting from Farm Bill programs," said Matt Hough, DUC manager of conservation programs in Kansas. "We need to ensure these programs are funded for the benefit of wildlife and producers"
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