



DELAWARE, MARYLAND & WEST VIRGINIA

GREAT LAKES / ATLANTIC REGION • 2018 STATE CONSERVATION REPORT

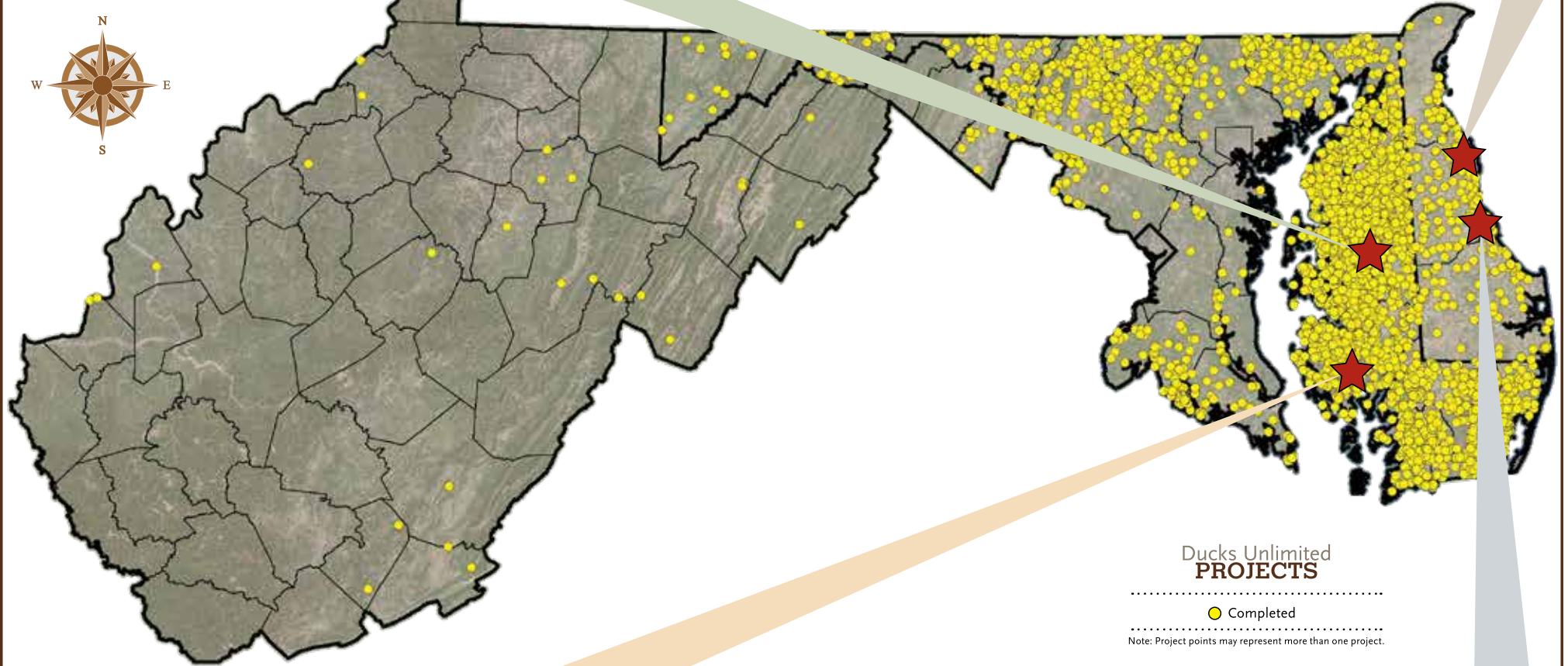
MARYLAND PRIVATE WETLAND RESTORATION ONGOING

With support from three Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) grants, Ducks Unlimited has implemented wetland restoration projects on private lands on Maryland's Eastern Shore for the last six years. Accomplishments from the first two grants total 18 projects and nearly 120 acres restored. The third grant, under way, includes 10 additional projects from Cecil County to Dorchester County over the next three years. The first projects under this grant are expected to be restored in 2018.



ENHANCEMENT OF OVER 500 ACRES OF WETLAND HABITAT AT BOMBAY HOOK COMPLETED IN 2017

Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge in central Delaware is a critical stopover for waterfowl in the Atlantic migratory flyway. Ducks Unlimited and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service enhanced more than 500 acres of emergent wetland by replacing wetland infrastructure in 2017. Refuge staff can now exclude tidal saltwater from three freshwater impoundments managed to benefit migratory birds. The investment will help waterfowlers and birders. Bombay Hook is known among birders as an international hot spot and is recognized as one of America's 100 Important Bird Areas by the American Bird Conservancy. The project was funded by a \$1 million North American Wetland Conservation Act grant.



IMPORTANT MARYLAND REFUGE TO BE RESTORED IN 2018

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge is one of the most biodiverse and ecologically valuable areas in Maryland. A major habitat component at the refuge is a series of constructed freshwater impoundments which are managed specifically to benefit waterfowl and other migratory birds. Many of these freshwater impoundments are located at the land/water interface and are at risk of being lost to anticipated sea level rise. Beginning this year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ducks Unlimited and the Maryland DNR will restore a 60-acre impounded former agricultural area and return wetland function to approximately 38 acres while enhancing management capabilities at the remainder of the site.



COASTAL WETLANDS GET HELP IN DELAWARE

Rising sea levels from climate change are inundating Delaware's coastal wetlands damaging valuable Atlantic Flyway waterfowl migration habitat. These coastal conditions are forcing Ducks Unlimited and our partners to create new conservation solutions. One example had Ducks Unlimited team up with Delaware Wild Lands to save a freshwater wetland from the effects of salt water intrusion along Delaware Bay in the central part of the state. The project site, located on property owned by Delaware Wild Lands, consisted of two degrading wetlands, coastal forest and marginally productive agricultural land. As part of a \$1 million NAWCA grant for Delaware projects, Ducks Unlimited installed berms and low-cost, low-maintenance infrastructure to help keep out the saltwater. The enhancement work also expanded the restored area and wetland complex from 8 to 13 acres.



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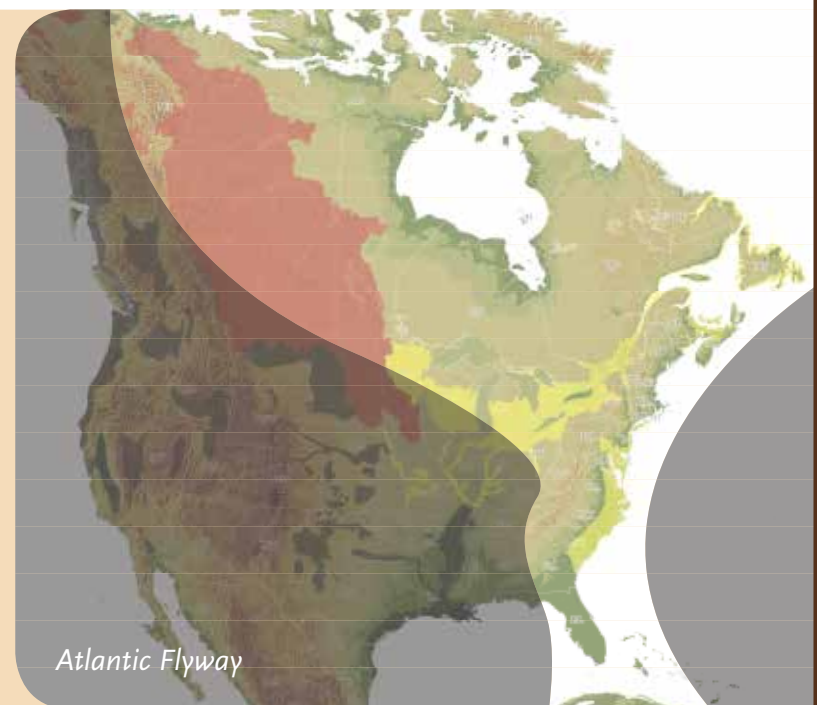
Delaware, Maryland and West Virginia are part of Ducks Unlimited's Completing the Cycle conservation initiative.

The initiative addresses the needs of Atlantic Flyway waterfowl throughout their life cycle. This holistic approach focuses on the most important factors that limit waterfowl populations. It ensures the landscape can support healthy birds throughout the year so waterfowl can complete the cycle, return to the breeding grounds and successfully reproduce.

Nowhere is this more important than in the Mid-Atlantic, a region which encompasses the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays, two of the nation's largest estuaries. Each of these bays is a traditional stopover or wintering destination providing crucial habitat during seasonal migration.

The Chesapeake and Delaware Bays continue to support a significant number of waterfowl. However, these bays have been heavily impacted by human activity in the 400 years since European colonization. Much of the regions' original wetlands have been lost and those that remain are often functioning at reduced capacity.

Ducks Unlimited habitat projects promote healthier ecosystems, which helps not just waterfowl but the millions of other wildlife and people who rely on the coastal waters.



LOOKING AHEAD

Delaware: Ducks Unlimited will continue to provide financial and technical support to Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife to improve the resiliency of state-owned coastal freshwater wetland complexes up and down the Delaware Bayshore. Projects include assisting with the restoration of nearly 1,000 acres of wetlands at Little Creek Wildlife Area. Ducks Unlimited also received a grant from the Welfare Foundation in late 2017 to plant trees on 100 acres of recently restored forested wetlands at Bombay Hook and Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuges.

Maryland: Ducks Unlimited in 2018 will work with Eastern Shore landowners to restore marginal agricultural lands to productive wetland habitat. At least two projects will be completed this year. Ducks Unlimited will continue a longstanding partnership with Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge by restoring 60 acres of moist soil wetland while completing restoration designs for additional projects in 2019. Ducks Unlimited also is partnering with land trusts across the Delmarva Peninsula to protect important habitat for American Black Ducks.

West Virginia: Ducks Unlimited will continue to offer technical assistance and cost-share funding to partners in the state who are implementing waterfowl-friendly conservation projects.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Delaware, Maryland and West Virginia are vital to the goals of Duck's Unlimited's Great Lakes/Atlantic Region. The entire team in these states, including our volunteers, fundraising staff and conservation staff, has developed a winning strategy that grows stronger each year.

Our 21-state region had a tremendous impact on waterfowl habitat and water quality in 2017. We used private donations and public funds to invest nearly \$22 million on conservation projects. That strong support enabled our biologists and engineers to deliver focused, effective habitat conservation on 48,111 acres of wetlands.

None of this would be possible without our volunteers, conservation partners and financial supporters. The accomplishments of Ducks Unlimited are your accomplishments. As an organization, we can trumpet our success knowing how strongly equipped we are to improve the health of wetlands across North America for the next generation.

Thank you for believing in our mission, and for helping us reach our vision of wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever.

David Brakhage, GLARO Director of Operations

DE/MD/WV BY THE NUMBERS

2017

- 8 projects
- 1,492 acres conserved
- \$920,177 invested

HISTORICAL

- 71,267 acres conserved
- \$16,664,162 invested

Learn more at www.ducks.org/delaware, www.ducks.org/maryland or www.ducks.org/west-virginia

MID-ATLANTIC 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.

Visit us online at www.ducks.org



GREAT LAKES / ATLANTIC REGION

WE'VE MOVED! Please note our new address
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