



### VITAL UPPER PENINSULA HABITAT REVAMPED

Baraga, Houghton Counties

Ducks Unlimited and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) developed a long-term, cost-effective alternate to replace a 60-year pump system at Sturgeon River Sloughs State Wildlife Management Area in the Upper Peninsula. New efficient electric pump and water distribution systems installed in 2019 enable the DNR to manage wetland habitats more effectively. The Sloughs are one of the Upper Peninsula's most productive wetland areas.



### BIG MARSH LAKE SUPPORTERS HONORED

Calhoun County

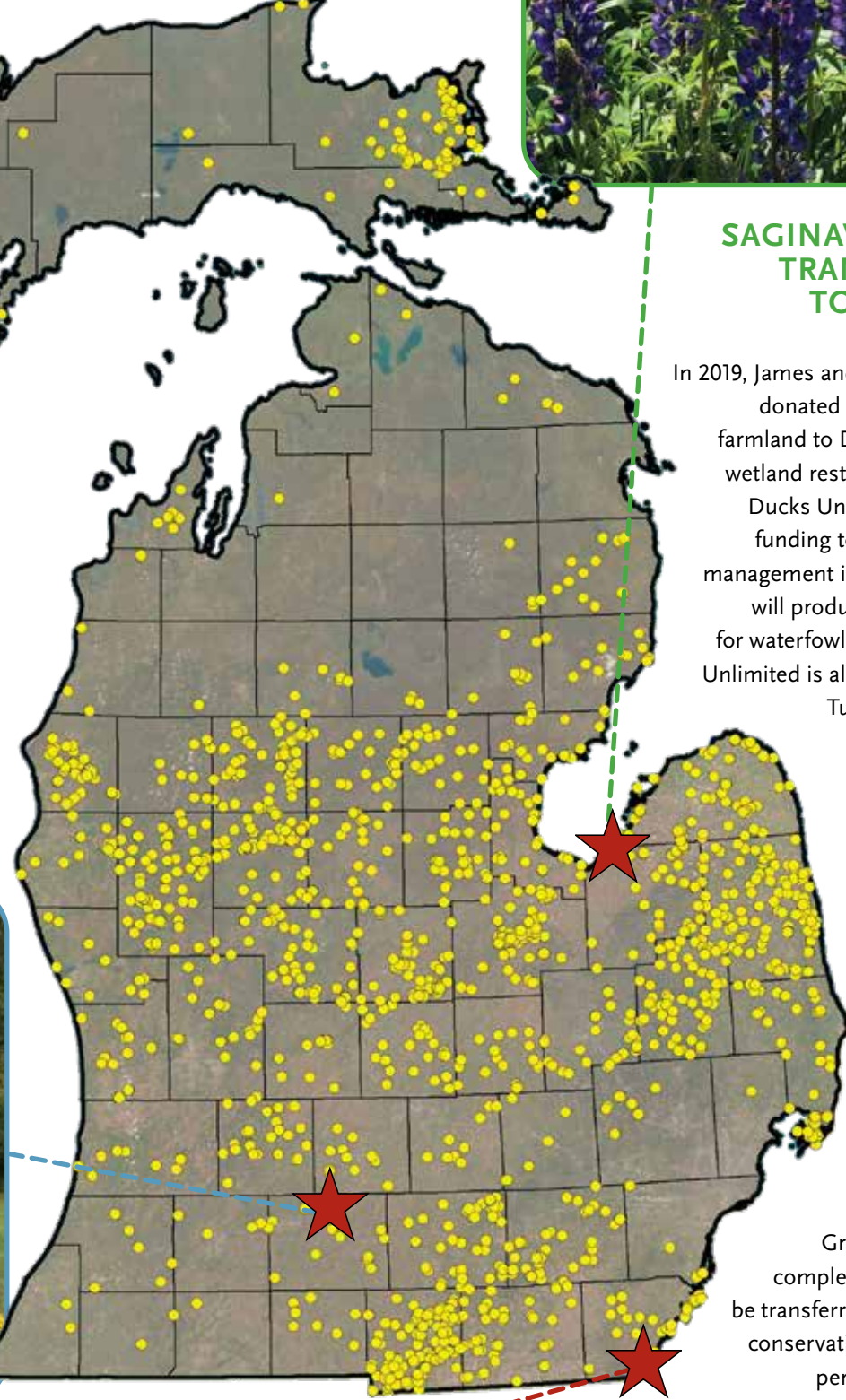
Ducks Unlimited in September recognized several major donors and legacy Greenwing members at a dedication at Big Marsh Lake, with Kiwanis Club of Battle Creek and Michigan Audubon. Originally drained in the early 1900s for cattle grazing, these wetlands have improved through several generations of conservation since the 1960s. Ducks Unlimited and several partners played a key role in 2008 when they enhanced Big Marsh Lake by replacing water-control infrastructure. The result was 200 acres of quality wetland habitat which has attracted waterfowl, wildlife and record numbers of sandhill cranes ever since. The event celebrates the lives of Larry Arbogast, a dedicated member of the Ducks Unlimited family, and Riley Manning, a legacy greenwing Ducks Unlimited member.



### SAGINAW BAY FARM TRANSITIONING TO WETLANDS

Tuscola County

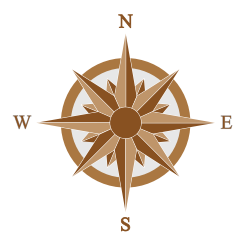
In 2019, James and DeAnn Sattelberg donated 250 acres of former farmland to Ducks Unlimited for wetland restoration. Since then, Ducks Unlimited has secured funding to design water level management infrastructure which will produce healthier habitat for waterfowl and wildlife. Ducks Unlimited is also working with the Tuscola Conservation District to restore native grasslands and treat invasive phragmites vegetation. Funding is through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Coastal Program and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources' Wildlife Habitat Grant Program. When complete, the property will be transferred to a professional conservation organization for permanent protection.



### ERIE MARSH PRESERVE COMPLETED

Monroe County

The third phase of this 900-acre coastal wetlands enhancement in North Maumee Bay of Lake Erie is now complete. Ducks Unlimited bio-engineering staff completed survey, design and delivery of new dikes, rehabilitation of existing dikes and installation of water-level control structures. This project will allow The Nature Conservancy and Erie Shooting Club to properly manage water levels in multiple individual managed coastal wetlands, providing improved wetland habitat for waterfowl and other migratory birds that depend on the western Lake Erie basin of Michigan.



**Ducks Unlimited  
PROJECTS**

● Completed ★ Featured

Note: Project points may represent more than one project.

## LAKE ERIE HEALTH RELIES ON PRIVATE LAND CONSERVATION

Prior to 1850, the western Lake Erie basin region of Michigan, Ohio and Indiana had 300,000 acres of highly productive wetlands and a low density of people. More than 150 years later, the situation has flipped.

A bigger population of people has made drastic changes to the landscape. The Lake Erie watershed has experienced the most significant impacts from wetland drainage, native prairie conversion, development and pollution in the Great Lakes ecosystem. More than 95 percent of the vast system of coastal wetlands and inland marshes are gone.

Fewer wetlands mean fewer migratory rest stops for birds, and poor water quality for the growing number of people who live here.

More than 90 percent of this region is privately owned and expensive to conserve, requiring new methods to combat the lack of wetlands. Since 2014, Ducks Unlimited turned to donor support and more than \$1 million in federal Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act (GLFWRA) funding to address the problem. GLFWRA funding provides the money for conservation groups to improve habitat and water quality on private land.

Ducks Unlimited has completed two phases of GLFWRA grants to restore more than 900 acres of wetlands and grasslands in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana. In 2019, DU was approved for a third phase, receiving \$350,000 to restore or enhance 200 acres of wetlands on private lands.

“The importance of the western Lake Erie basin to people and wildlife can’t be understated,” said Kali Rush, Ducks Unlimited regional biologist. “More than 300 species of birds have been documented here, and the area’s wetlands serve as a primary migration corridor for 27 species of waterfowl.”

For people, the lack of wetlands creates a health concern. Sediment and nutrients from agricultural runoff have created a water quality crisis in western Lake Erie, impacting residents who rely on Lake Erie or ground water for drinking water supply and local businesses that rely on outdoor recreation for their livelihood.

“We are eager to start this next phase of Great Lakes conservation,” Rush said. “Support from Ducks Unlimited members and donors give us the ability to enhance this beautiful habitat for future generations of birds and people.”

Left: Canada goose  
Middle: Blue-winged teal  
Right: Wood duck



## LOOKING AHEAD

**Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge** - Ducks Unlimited and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service plan to install water control structures to reconnect Ferguson Bayou to its historical channel.

**Anchor Bay Woods Preserve** - Ducks Unlimited, Six Rivers Land Conservancy and Axalta plan to acquire 21 acres of imperiled wet-mesic flatwoods to expand the conservancy’s Anchor Bay Woods Preserve in New Baltimore. The partnership has protected 195 of 319 acres of the remaining intact wet-mesic flatwoods.

**Southeastern Lake Michigan Watershed** - DU will propose a suite of projects within southwest Michigan for consideration to North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) to build on previous conservation efforts within the watershed, including three NAWCA standard grants and nine small grants. This collaboration has contributed significantly to the 2,380 acres conserved within the southeastern Lake Michigan watershed.

## MICHIGAN BY THE NUMBERS

### 2019

- 10 projects
- 2,100 acres enhanced, protected or restored
- \$2.3 million invested

### HISTORICAL

- 420 projects
- 85,354 acres enhanced, protected or restored
- \$46.2 million invested

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



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



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