

GREAT LAKES/ATLANTIC REGION

GREAT LAKES INITIATIVE



CONSTRUCTION COMPLETE AT FERGUSON BAYOU - SHIAWASSEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Saginaw County

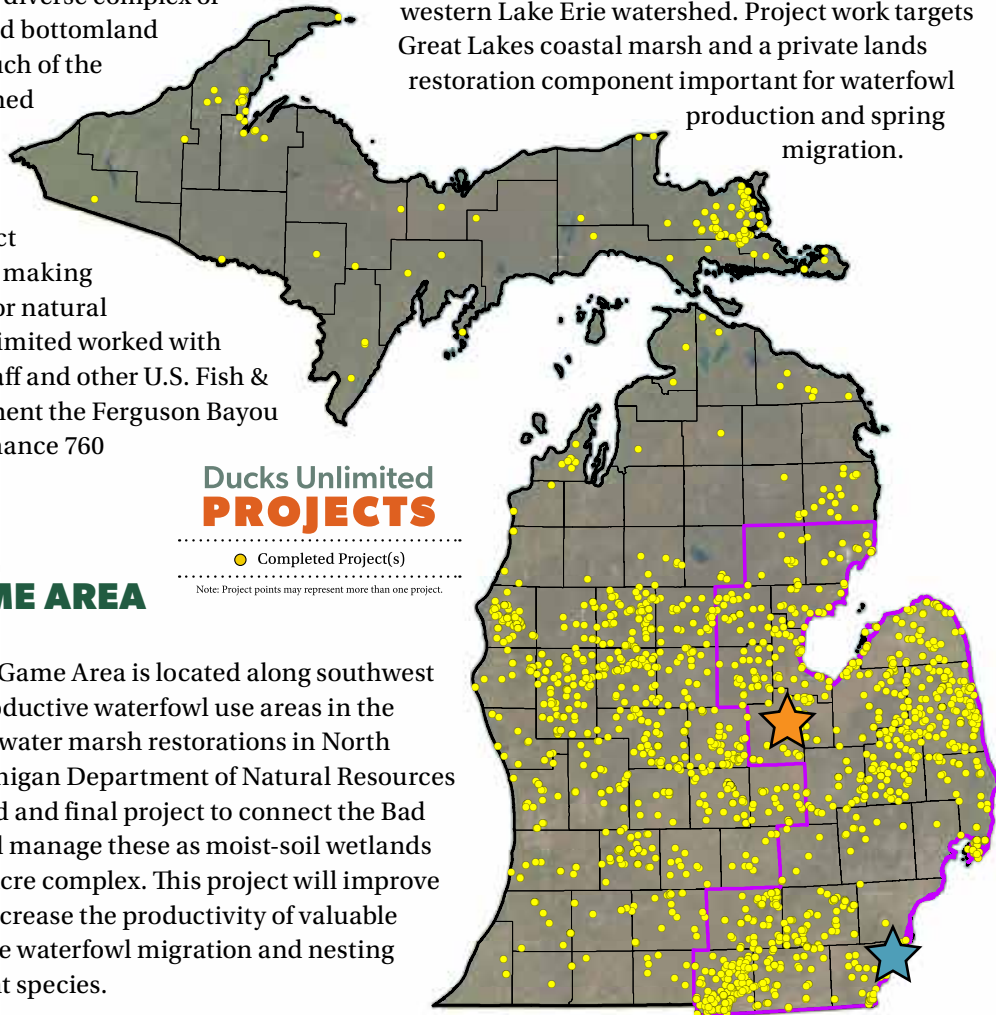
The Shiawassee Flats is a 40,000-acre floodplain basin formed at the confluence of the Bad, Cass, Flint, Shiawassee, and Tittabawassee Rivers. Historically the Flats were a diverse complex of

emergent, submergent, scrub-shrub, and bottomland forested floodplain wetlands. Today, much of the region and the upper part of the watershed is intensively farmed. Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge and Ducks Unlimited have been at the forefront of an emerging paradigm shift to reconnect restored wetlands to their floodplain by making the hydrologic connections that allow for natural water fluctuations a priority. Ducks Unlimited worked with Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge staff and other U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service regional staff to implement the Ferguson Bayou Hydrologic Reconnection project to enhance 760 acres of floodplain wetlands.

SAGINAW BAY TO LAKE ERIE COASTAL HABITAT INITIATIVE

Southeastern Michigan

Following decades of North American Wetlands Conservation Act funded wetlands conservation in Michigan, Ducks Unlimited in partnership with Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Pheasants Forever, Legacy Land Conservancy, and other conservation agencies will receive funding via a \$1M Standard Grant to restore, enhance, and acquire 1,400 acres in the Saginaw Bay to Lake Erie area. This project focuses on wetland and associated upland habitat conservation in the Saginaw Bay area and southward along Michigan's major waterfowl migration corridor through Lake St. Clair and down the Detroit River to the western Lake Erie watershed. Project work targets Great Lakes coastal marsh and a private lands restoration component important for waterfowl production and spring migration.



★ POINTE SEC – POINTE MOUILLEE STATE GAME AREA

Monroe County

The 4,000-acre Pointe Mouillee State Game Area is located along southwest Lake Erie within one of the most productive waterfowl use areas in the Great Lakes. It is one of the largest freshwater marsh restorations in North America. Ducks Unlimited and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) are gearing up to restore the third and final project to connect the Bad Creek and Cripple Point Units. DNR will manage these as moist-soil wetlands following construction, creating a 108-acre complex. This project will improve water level management capabilities, increase the productivity of valuable coastal hemi-marsh conditions, improve waterfowl migration and nesting habitat, and better control invasive plant species.

GREAT LAKES MALLARD HABITAT TARGETED

Ducks Unlimited biologists representing five states have partnered with 14 conservation organizations and agencies to receive a \$1 million North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant aimed at increasing the breeding population of mallards in the Great Lakes.

Mallard numbers in the Great Lakes region have been on the decline, with estimates indicating their population at 18% below long-term average. These home-grown mallards are a primary component of waterfowl harvest in the Great Lakes. In Wisconsin, Michigan and Ohio, these birds comprise between one-half to three-quarters of the waterfowl hunters' daily bag. And they are harvested in great numbers by hunters in Indiana, Illinois and farther south in the flyway each fall.

The DU-led partnership will launch projects to meet the specific needs of mallards breeding in the Great Lakes region across an area most likely to produce the greatest population increases.

The project area spans 115 contiguous counties across Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin including mallard breeding habitat on more than 2,000 acres of public and private land.

With more than \$2.5 million of matching partner funds, DU and its conservation partners; USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, Michigan DNR, Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy and Pheasants Forever are pursuing an ambitious goal of protecting, restoring or enhancing nearly 2,000 acres of small wetland basins and adjoining grassland



nesting cover throughout the core breeding area for mallards breeding in the Great Lakes region.

DU Regional Biologist Dane Cramer said the projects go beyond mallards. "The breeding habitat needs of mallards intersects with two of the Upper Mississippi/Great Lakes Joint Venture's other three breeding waterfowl focal species, wood ducks and blue-winged teal."

Projects funded by the NAWCA grant were chosen with special consideration to people, too. Access to recreational hunting and birding are crucial components, as well as improving water quality.

Many of the projects are on public land, but not enough public acres exist to have the impact necessary to improve mallard numbers. To address this, \$400,000 of grant funds will support private land restoration efforts throughout the Great Lakes project area, with roughly \$100,000 to each of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Private Lands Offices in Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana and Michigan.



DU PROJECTS INTERACTIVE AERIAL TOUR

The best way to see Ducks Unlimited conservation is from a duck's point of view. You can now tour nearly 70 DU projects from the sky, via an interactive map. Narrated by DU biologists, viewers will learn how our work is improving both water quality and wildlife habitat.

Michigan by the Numbers

2021

- 51 projects
- 769 acres conserved
- \$2,118,353 invested

HISTORICAL

- 439 projects
- 88,402 acres conserved
- \$46.9 million invested

For more information visit 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



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