

FRENCH CREEK PROGRAM ENTERS SIXTH PHASE

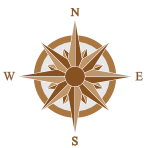
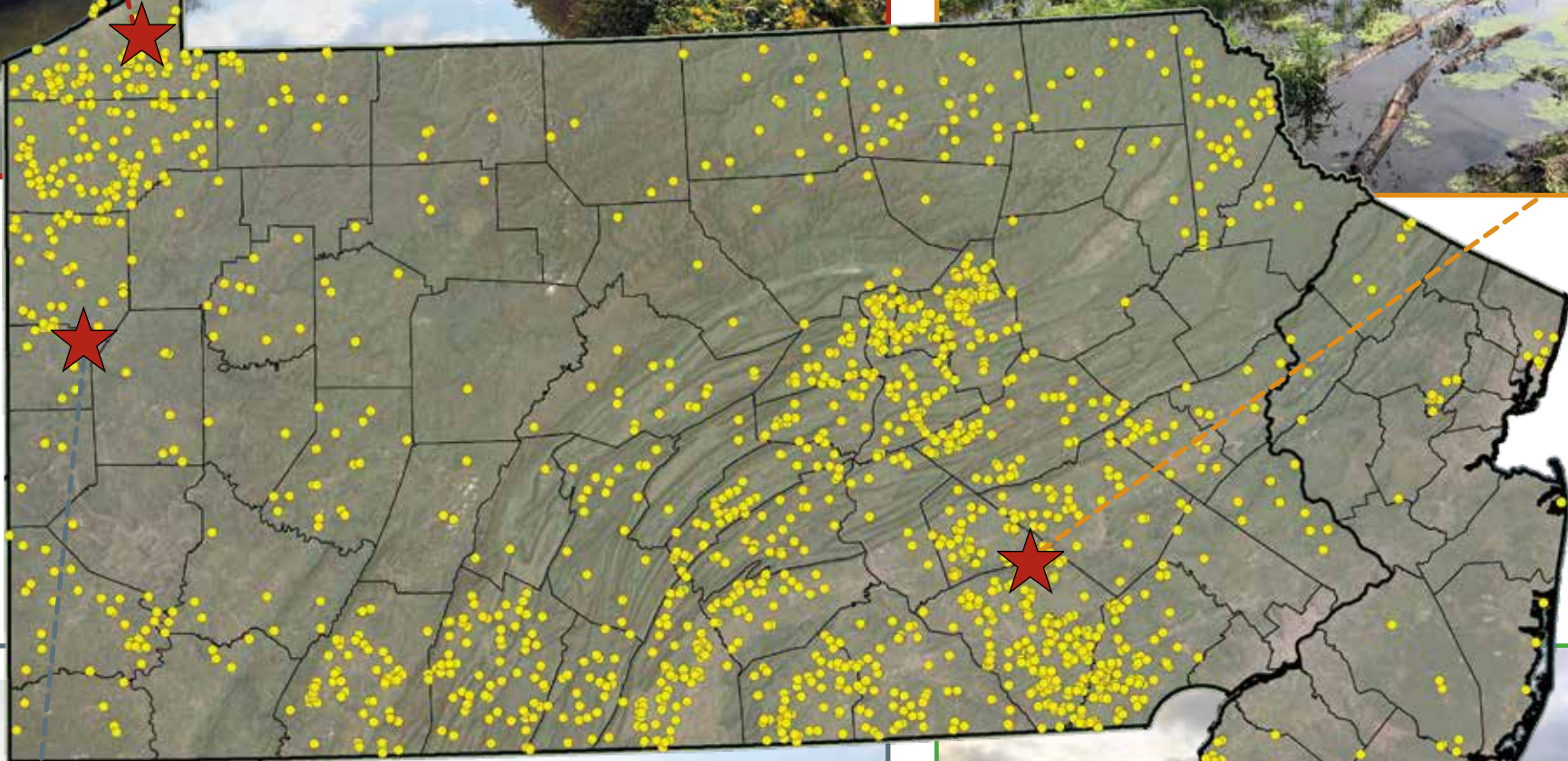
Erie County, PA

The French Creek Watershed is a pristine biodiversity hotspot in northwest Pennsylvania along Lake Erie. Ducks Unlimited, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC), Richard King Mellon Foundation and a private donor are moving forward with the fourth phase of the French Creek Wetland Initiative which will protect 391 acres at two sites in the watershed. The acquisitions will permanently protect 118 acres of wetlands and 268 acres of associated upland habitat from human development. The protection of these properties will benefit waterfowl and other wetland dependent species. Once acquired the properties will be added to WPC's 5,200 acres of conserved lands within the French Creek Watershed. The project is supported with North American Wetlands Conservation Act funds.

ENHANCED MIDDLE CREEK TO ENTICE WATERFOWL

Lebanon County, PA

Ducks Unlimited in 2019 helped the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) restore water management capabilities to a five-acre flooded timber impoundment at Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area in southeast Pennsylvania. This area is an important wintering and migration spot for waterfowl. It's used by thousands of Canada geese, snow geese and tundra swans as well as mallards, wood ducks and American black ducks. The project replaced aging infrastructure and gave the PGC the ability to regulate water levels to create optimum waterfowl habitat.



Ducks Unlimited
PROJECTS

● Completed DU Project

Note: Project points may represent more than one project.



FORMER BAITFISH FARM ACQUIRED

Mercer, Lawrence Counties, PA

Ducks Unlimited in 2019 helped acquire a 126-acre former aquaculture property in northwest Pennsylvania that had turned into fallow conditions since being abandoned in the 1990s. DU used grant funding from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to purchase the property, and DCNR funding to design a restoration project and restore the land to productive habitat. The land in 2020 will be added to the 1,438-acre State Game Lands 151, and DU will use donor and event fundraising to pay for restoration construction. Project partners include the Hohmann family, Pennsylvania Game Commission and Waterfowl USA.

NEW GROUND, HUNTING AT TUCKAHOE WMA

Cape May, Atlantic Counties, NJ

The enhancement of 941 acres of wetlands at Tuckahoe Wildlife Management Area back in 2018 acted as a catalyst for future growth and waterfowling opportunities. Since the 2018 work, Ducks Unlimited and partners have acquired more than 800 acres and added it to the management area for permanent protection. And in 2020, the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife plans to introduce a lottery waterfowl draw system for the enhanced impoundments. It will be the first state hunting lottery system for waterfowl hunting. Details are still being determined, and more information will be available at the division's website: www.nj.gov/dep/fgw.



PLANTING FOR THE FUTURE IN NEW JERSEY

Migrating ducks and geese in New Jersey weren't the only things looking to feast on newly enhanced 941 acres of Tuckahoe Wildlife Management Area.

After Ducks Unlimited, New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife and Cape May County Department of Mosquito Control (CMCDMC) reconstructed the coastal impoundments in 2018, invasive vegetation threatened to overtake fertile soil and prevent waterfowl-friendly plants from taking root. Non-native phragmites and other species can quickly turn a wetland into an aquatic desert, devoid of diversity.



To keep invading plants out, Ducks Unlimited called in foot soldiers. Nearly two dozen volunteers from local DU chapters joined CMCDMC and members of the American Conservation Experience last spring to help plant 52,000 plants across several acres of the Tuckahoe project. An additional two tons of wild millet and panic grass were aerial seeded covering roughly 190 acres.

Volunteers planted 10 different species of native vegetation across a varied landscape. On the increasingly rare high marsh habitat they planted plugs of spartina patens or saltmeadow cordgrass. Throw in spartina alterniflora, or smooth cord grass, duck potato, soft rush and others, and the result in a few growing seasons will be a lush landscape attractive to a host of wildlife.



Jim Feaga, Ducks Unlimited regional biologist in New Jersey, said several measures will hopefully nurture the young plants. The New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife will manage water levels to promote growth. And like backyard gardeners dealing with browsing deer and rabbits, Ducks Unlimited volunteers put up walls.

"We put up goose exclusion fencing, to keep molting (and flightless) geese last summer from chowing down on plants," he said.



Kevin Stupp is chairman of the Cumberland County chapter of Ducks Unlimited and is the Southern New Jersey Zone Chairman. This was his first time helping plant a new wave of waterfowl vegetation.



"It'll be neat this spring to come back and see how much of it has taken root and is growing, and to see the ducks in them," Stupp said.



NJ/PA NUMBERS

2019

- 9 projects
- 939 acres conserved
- \$730,000 invested

HISTORICAL

- 267 projects
- 48,035 acres conserved
- \$21.6 million invested

For more information visit www.ducks.org

NJ/PA CONSERVATION STAFF



◀ **JIM FEAGA**, Regional Biologist
Contact: jfeaga@ducks.org • 717.965.3144

Tamara Jameson, Regional Engineer
Gregg Bachman, Senior Engineering Tech
Jeff Duncan, Senior Engineering Tech
Jade Phillips, Senior Engineering Tech

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



GREAT LAKES & ATLANTIC REGION

7322 Newman Blvd., Building 1, Dexter, MI 48130
Phone number: 734.623.2000