

GREAT LAKES & ATLANTIC REGION

COMPLETING THE CYCLE INITIATIVE



★ **GALILEE MARSH** Rhode Island

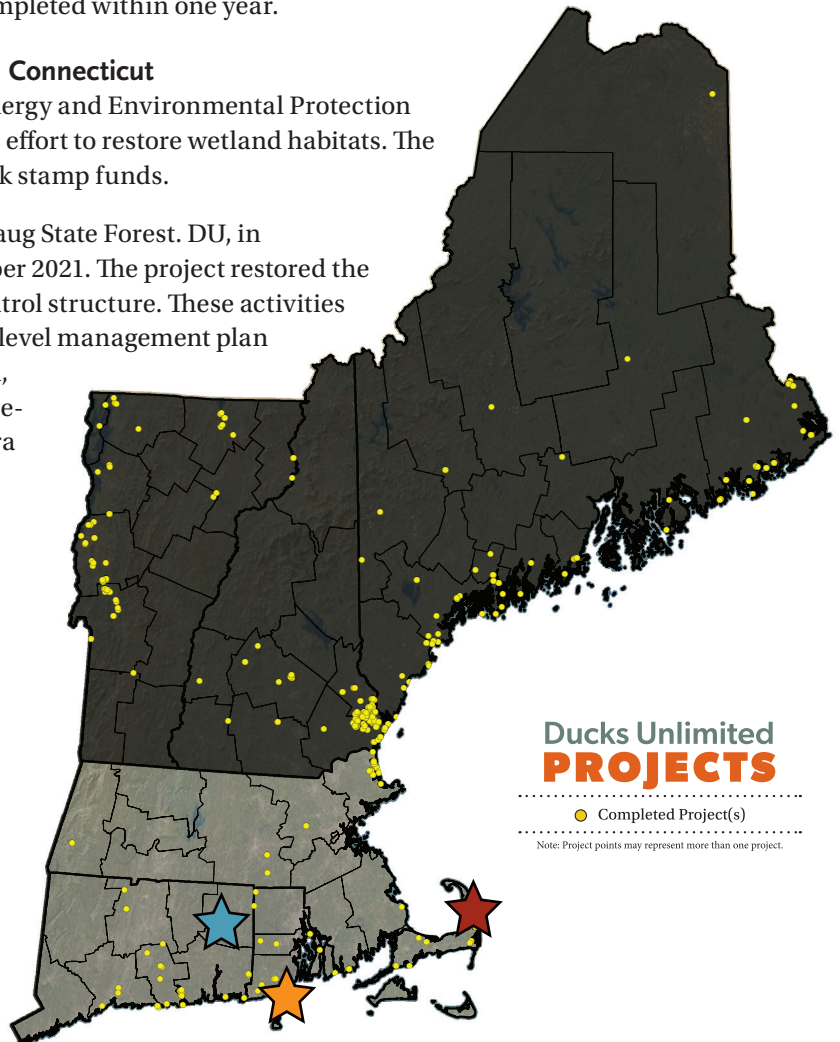
The 100-acre Galilee Bird Sanctuary, owned by Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM), is managed for wildlife conservation and hunting. The salt marsh habitat is currently declining in value, and *Phragmites australis* is starting to move in. The current tidal gates used to manage water flow in and out of the marsh are no longer functioning. To ensure priority habitats at Galilee Bird Sanctuary can be managed, DU is partnering with the RIDEM to 1) assess current hydrological conditions, 2) assess salt marsh surface elevations, 3) evaluate the integrity and suitability of existing tidal gates, and 4) calibrate self-regulating tidal gates. This project will help enhance priority habitat and allow managers to test the efficacy of tidal gates to restore high marsh habitat for nesting Saltmarsh Sparrows. The project will advance through 2022 and will be completed within one year.



★ **PAPINEAU MARSH COMPLETED** Connecticut

Ducks Unlimited and Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP) are actively engaged in a comprehensive effort to restore wetland habitats. The Papineau project was funded through Connecticut Duck stamp funds.

The Papineau Marsh is located in the 13,438 acre Natchaug State Forest. DU, in cooperation with CTDEEP restored 26-acres in November 2021. The project restored the existing berm and replaced a malfunctioning water control structure. These activities will benefit the marsh system by implementing a water level management plan to maximize habitat for breeding and staging waterfowl, such as black ducks, mallards, and wood ducks, the state-endangered wood turtle, and CT species of concern, sora and Virginia rail.





★ HERRING RIVER PARTNERSHIP (MA):

Spanning over 1,000 acres and six miles of waterways, the Herring River, which runs through the Massachusetts towns of Wellfleet and Truro, once supported a vibrant wetland and coastal river ecosystem on the Gulf of Maine and hosted one of the most important fish runs on Outer Cape Cod. Unfortunately, the construction of a dike across the river's mouth in 1909 and other alterations to the river's hydrology effectively eliminated tidal flow, drained the salt marshes, and transformed the estuary into one of Cape Cod's most degraded natural resources.

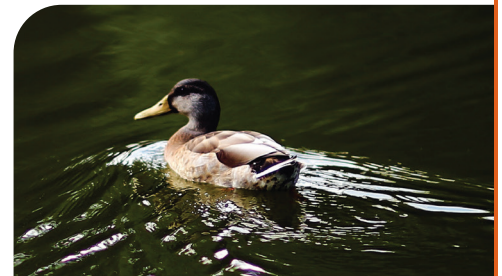
DU, Town of Wellfleet, National Park Service: Cape Cod National Seashore, Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game, Division of Ecological Restoration, Friends of Herring River, Friends of the Cape Cod National Seashore, Wellfleet Conservation Trust, and a private landowner are partnering to actively protect and restore 1,741.5-acres of critical wetland and upland habitat within the Herring River Watershed. The goal of the restoration project is to restore the biological function and integrity of the tidal marsh estuary. The partners recently received a \$2M NAWCA grant to help fund the initial restoration work at Cape National Seashore. The NAWCA funding will be used to control invasive Phragmites, remove woody debris, remove barriers, recreate channels and ditches, and remove spoil berms. All activities will be implemented to improve tidal flow through the marsh. "Once completed, tidal exchange will be managed and increased over time. DU will help lead the project's first stage, said Sarah Fleming. "DU is looking forward to providing additional help as the project nears the construction phase. This is a huge wintering area for American black ducks, one of our species of concern in this region," Fleming added. The project will start in summer 2022 and continue through 2025.

PARTNERS INITIATE LARGE-SCALE STUDY TO EVALUATE DECLINE IN EASTERN MALLARDS

Mallards are a shared migratory resource and one of the most important species to hunters in the Atlantic Flyway. Based on banding data, locally produced mallards often contribute substantially to the annual harvest. Despite their value, the eastern mallard breeding population has declined 1% annually from a peak of 1.4 million birds in the mid-1990s to 1.05 million birds in 2019. The overall trend is worrisome but of greater concern is that the sub-population of breeding mallards in the northeastern US has declined by an estimated 36% over the past 20 years, while the sub-population in eastern Canada has remained relatively stable.

To shed light on the decline, a partnership including 21 state, federal and non-profit organizations from across the Atlantic Flyway have come together to initiate a new study

to investigate the migration ecology and demographics of eastern mallards. Over the next four winters, partners will mark more than 1,000 hen mallards from South Carolina to eastern Canada using state of the art solar powered GPS-acceleration (behavioral) radio transmitters. This winter, project partners will be deploying 330 transmitters starting in January. Location and activity data collected via these transmitters will allow us to evaluate survival, nesting, migration timing, and habitat use differences throughout the year between the northeastern US and eastern Canada sub-populations. Several DU major donors are generously providing financial support for DU's involvement in this work.



New England by the Numbers

HISTORIC

- More than \$9.5 Million invested
- Over 40,500 acres conserved

For more information visit www.ducks.org



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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



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