

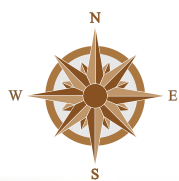
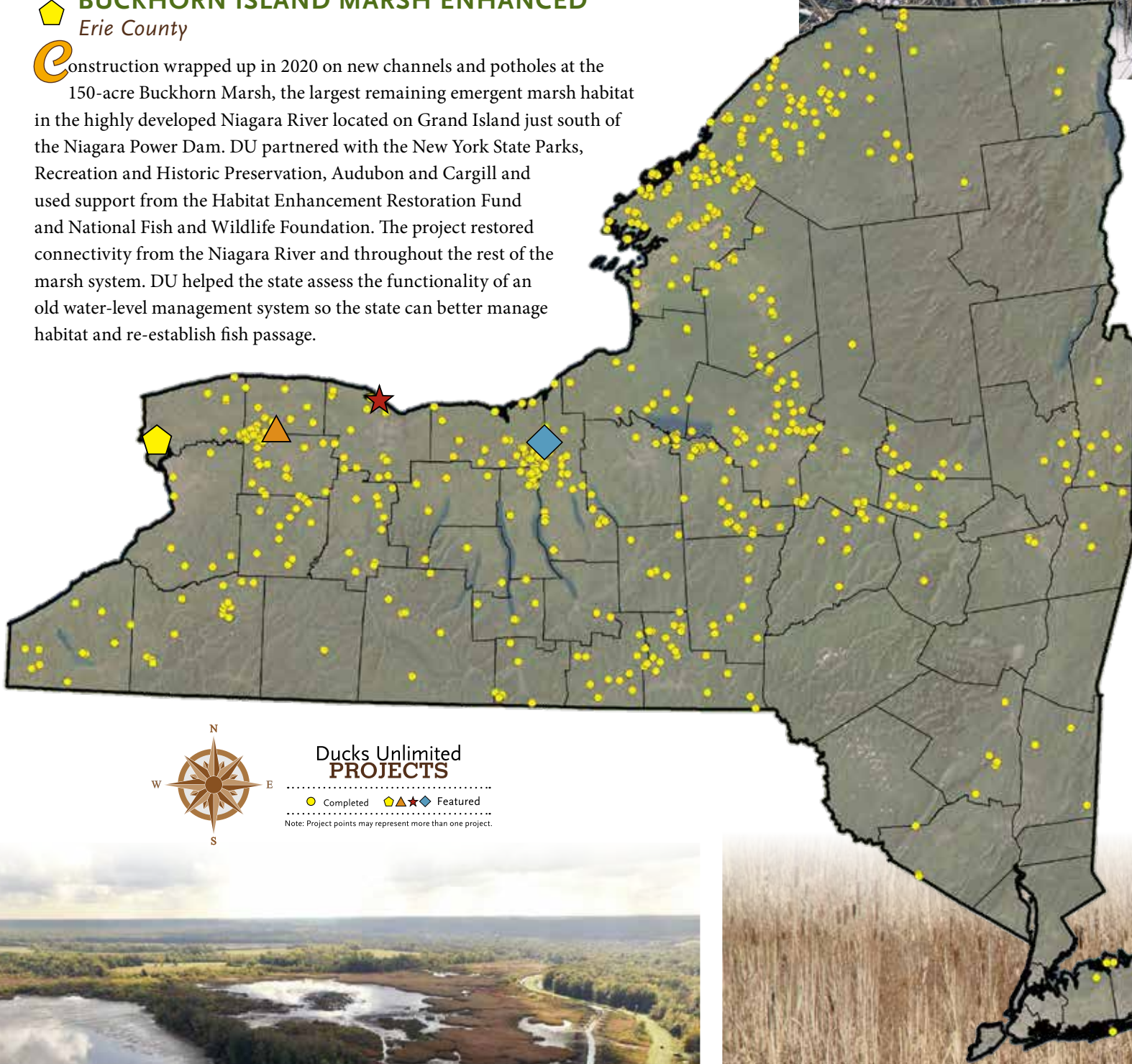
# New York

## 2021 CONSERVATION REPORT



### BUCKHORN ISLAND MARSH ENHANCED *Erie County*

Construction wrapped up in 2020 on new channels and potholes at the 150-acre Buckhorn Marsh, the largest remaining emergent marsh habitat in the highly developed Niagara River located on Grand Island just south of the Niagara Power Dam. DU partnered with the New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Audubon and Cargill and used support from the Habitat Enhancement Restoration Fund and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The project restored connectivity from the Niagara River and throughout the rest of the marsh system. DU helped the state assess the functionality of an old water-level management system so the state can better manage habitat and re-establish fish passage.



#### Ducks Unlimited PROJECTS

● Completed ●▲★◆ Featured  
Note: Project points may represent more than one project.

### CRANBERRY POND CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY

The 191-acre Cranberry Pond is a Lake Ontario coastal marsh vital to the semi-annual migrations of waterfowl and other birds of the Atlantic Flyway. The marsh has been degraded by cattails, and Ducks Unlimited and the New York Audubon Society will improve habitat by improving channels and potholes. In addition to providing quality staging areas for birds, the enhanced marsh will be important to human recreation. Located near the urban center of Rochester, Cranberry Pond will be an inviting location for hunting, kayaking and birding. The partnership uses a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant.



### WINDMILL MARSH FLUSH WITH NEW HABITAT *Genesee County*

Ducks Unlimited and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation restored management capability to 123 acres of habitat in Windmill Marsh at Oak Orchard Wildlife Management Area. The project enhanced infrastructure which allows state managers to completely draw down water levels to control invasive vegetation that has degraded the marsh in recent years. Construction was completed in September 2020. Funding was partially provided by a North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant, the same grant which will enhance West Ruddy Marsh at the nearby Tonawanda Wildlife Management Area in 2021.

### SENECA RIVER FLOODPLAIN ENHANCEMENTS BEGIN *Wayne and Cayuga Counties*

Ducks Unlimited and several partners are using a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant to enhance 65 acres of Seneca River floodplain marsh in 2021 at Northern Montezuma Wildlife Management Area. The project will improve the landscape and water flow by creating shallow scrapes, restoring channels and plugging ditches. Partners include Friends of the Montezuma Wetlands Complex, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Cargill and the Helen and Ritter Shumway Foundation.



## NORTHERN MONTEZUMA SITE WELCOMES BIRDS, PEOPLE

Ducks Unlimited supporters in 2020 celebrated the completion of the Loop Road project, a 140-acre restoration of Northern Montezuma Wildlife Management Area. The restoration included 125 acres of emergent marsh and 15 acres of grassland along the Seneca River.

“The project has been a success, as thousands of pintails used the site during the spring migration,” said Ed Farley, Ducks Unlimited regional biologist in New York.

The site, which is open to waterfowling, transformed a former agricultural field back into a natural wetland floodplain with shallow areas. These food-rich, managed lands receive the first shallow floods of the spring and are exceptional stop-over sites for waterfowl and shorebirds.

A public parking lot was added for access for hunters and recreationists. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) completed a 10-acre grassland restoration on an adjacent parcel of land, which will be managed as dense nesting cover to attract a diversity of native wildlife species.

The project improves water quality in the Seneca River by reducing soil erosion and sediment and nutrient run-off from rainfall. And the management area is popular with hunters, birders and hikers.

The site is a success story of cooperation between a wide range of partners, including Cargill, NYSDEC, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, the Helen and Ritter Shumway Foundation and the Friends of the Montezuma Wetlands Complex.



DU partners and supporters gathered in October to celebrate the restoration of the Loop Road project at Northern Montezuma Wildlife Management Area.



## FARLEY GUIDES FUTURE OF NEW YORK CONSERVATION

In August 2020, Ed Farley became DU’s new biologist for New York. He’s responsible for shaping the preservation and enhancement of waterfowl habitat in an Atlantic Flyway state that’s crucial for a diversity of ducks and geese.

“It really is an outdoor paradise up here. New York has extensive public lands and waters, and a lot more opportunity for outdoor recreation than I ever imagined. It’s perfect,” he said.

The new role is just Farley’s latest at Ducks Unlimited. He began as a conservation intern in 2015 at the Great Lakes/Atlantic Regional Office in Michigan. His first move to New York was in 2016 where he worked in DU’s wetland mitigation program in New York and Vermont.

DU’s priority areas in upstate New York are the Lake Ontario watershed and the St. Lawrence River Watershed, which are important staging and wintering areas. Coastal marshes are important for a variety of dabbling ducks, and other parts of the state are hot spots for scaup, sea ducks and canvasbacks.

## DU JOINS EASTERN MALLARD TRACKING STUDY

Ducks Unlimited is joining several partners to further study the decline in recent years of the eastern mallard population. During the mid-1990s, eastern mallard breeding populations peaked at approximately 1.4 million breeding birds followed by a steady decline of approximately 1% annually to 1.05 million in 2019.

Scientists and managers have posed a variety of explanations as to why eastern mallards have been declining. But to manage the population more effectively, scientists need more reliable estimates of productivity and seasonal survival.

The collaborative project will tag 150 female mallards in eastern Canada and 450 adult females in the U.S. portion of the eastern mallard range with Global Positioning System transmitters to better understand demographic rates, migration chronology, and habitat usage differences between the two sub-populations throughout the annual cycle.

The \$1 million project is in planning phases in 2021, with plans to track birds in early 2022.



## New York by the Numbers

### 2020

- 5 projects completed
- 369 acres conserved
- \$1.1 million invested

### HISTORICAL

- 56,726 acres conserved
- \$41.3 million invested



## New York 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.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT US ONLINE AT [WWW.DUCKS.ORG/NEW-YORK](http://WWW.DUCKS.ORG/NEW-YORK)



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