



# Fowl Talk

FALL 2016

## Major Sponsors Making an Impact on the Landscape



SDDU State Chair Elect-Bill Marketon and family far left, and SDDU State Campaign Chairman Gary Peterson, second from right, at the DU Major Sponsor Dedication Ceremony this summer.

A special ceremony held this summer highlighted the efforts of those who have provided significant support to a crucial Ducks Unlimited conservation initiative.

Among those gathered on

August 27 at the Engstom tract on the shores of Swan Lake were Minnesota and Iowa Major Sponsors that gave philanthropic support to DU's Preserve Our Prairies campaign. South Dakota



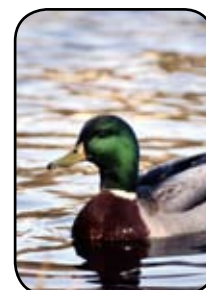
New Cover Crop Program Takes Root in South Dakota

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# Major Sponsors Making an Impact on the Landscape

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Ducks Unlimited volunteer leadership also attended the dedication as a way to say “thank you” to their neighbors to the south and east for supporting conservation work.

Private, philanthropic dollars are necessary to meet the goals of DU’s Rescue Our Wetland campaign, says Terry Kostinec, DU Director of Development for South Dakota, and will help address the challenges facing wetland and grassland conservation in the Prairie Pothole Region.

“Public grants require private matches, so by increasing our private support of this important conservation initiative, our staff will be able to apply for and receive new public funds for on-the-ground work in our state” Kostinec said.

Donors who make new or upgrade Major Sponsor pledges are taking a leadership stand to ensure our continent’s wetland and waterfowl habitat for future generations, says Steve Donovan, Ducks Unlimited Manager of Conservation Programs in South Dakota. A Major Sponsor pledge may be designated to a specific conservation initiative at the donor’s request, but all new revenues from major sponsors are tracked by our biologists, allowing them to budget private gifts into their grant proposal schedules.

“As we increase the support from our donors through new Major Sponsor pledges, we will be able to expand the scope and diversity of the conservation work through new opportunities, like the cover crop program in Beadle County,” Donovan said.

Director of Development, Terry Kostinec presents Karen and Brian Pellish with their Diamond Sponsor in

Perpetuity plaque at the Watertown DU event for their support of the “Preserve Our Prairie” conservation initiative.

Don Thorpe, Regional Director of Event Fundraising pointed out that many of SDDU’s new Major Sponsors often come from those supporters already within the current DU event fundraising programs.

“New Major Sponsor pledge payments can be paid through your local DU chapter event, thereby bolstering your local volunteers fundraising efforts and helping them earn recognition awards and special merchandise for future events,” Thorpe said.

State Campaign Chairman Gary Peterson of Sioux Falls adds that the time is right to increase support for South Dakota’s grasslands and wetlands.

“If not now, when? If not you, who,” asks Peterson. “Now, more than ever, we have the opportunity to more than double your private philanthropic gift with public dollars. Now is the time you should consider becoming a Major Sponsor.”

For more information on how you can make tax deductible gifts as a Major Sponsor, contact your South Dakota State Campaign committee.

Gary Peterson, State Campaign Chairman: (605) 366-4411

Terry Kostinec, Director of



Director of Development, Terry Kostinec presents Karen and Brian Pellish with their Diamond Sponsor in Perpetuity plaque at the Watertown DU event for their support of the “Preserve Our Prairie” conservation initiative.



Left: Life Sponsor Jim Moody of Cedar Falls Iowa and sons, Tyler and Brendan

Development: (605) 624-0098

Life Sponsor Jim Moody of Cedar Falls Iowa is explaining to his sons, Tyler and Brendan how he is leaving a legacy of

conservation so that they will continue to have opportunities to enjoy the outdoors.



## A Note from the State Chairman

Hunting season is upon us and so is the Ducks Unlimited fall event season. Those of you with fall events will be seeing a lot of Don Thorpe, our Regional Director. In the future we are hoping to give Don some help by having District and Zone Chairman help the local committees. The plan is to have them attend some committee meetings and provide assistance in areas such as ordering event merchandise and informing the volunteers by inviting them to your local committee meetings and banquets.

For those of you that do not know me I am Harold R. Bickner, the State Chairman for the next two years. I have been in the electrical contracting business in Kimball since 1981. My wife Lorie is a retired high school math and science teacher, and we have two grown children, Vincent and Maura. I have been involved with DU since 1986, serving as an Area Chairman, as well as treasurer. Since 2013 I have been on the State Convention Committee and served as the chairman in 2015. It is my desire to meet a lot of the people involved with South Dakota DU during my term as Chairman. I am here to serve DU of South Dakota, so please feel free to contact me.

South Dakota Ducks Unlimited owes Kevin Fuerst a great big "thank you" for his work as the State

Chairman the last two years. During Kevin's term South Dakota DU had great success, including the state calendar raffle, in which he is still active in helping with its success. It was my honor to except an award for Kevin at the National Convention this summer. The award was for 4th place among all states in recognition of the income from events, membership growth, attendance, chapter efficiency, etc. The state also placed in the top ten in several categories, including efficiency, attendance increase and life sponsor increase.

It is not too early to start thinking about this year's state convention to be held January 27-29 at the Cedar Shore Resort along the Missouri River at Oacoma. The convention committee has already begun working on the details, and it sounds like the theme will be "It's a Beach Party". It is a great way to break up the South Dakota winter along with seeing old friends and meeting some new ones.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce Bill Marketon as the new State Chairman Elect. Bill is from Hartford and is the process of getting started on his journey to being our next State Chairman. Please read the article on Bill in this issue of Fowl Talk and thank him for the giving of his time to Ducks Unlimited.



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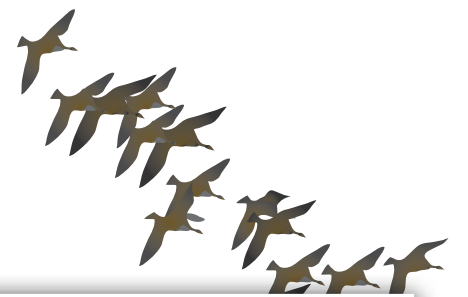
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# New Cover Crop Program Takes Root in South Dakota



Ducks Unlimited is excited to announce a new “cover crop” program available to landowners in important waterfowl habitats in eastern South Dakota.

Cover crops – the general term used to describe grasses, legumes or forbs planted to provide seasonal soil cover on cropland when the soil would otherwise be bare - are growing in popularity with South Dakota producers because of the diverse benefits they provide, including improving soil health, improving water quality, and reducing nutrient losses and thereby costs. And because the cover crop is often left undisturbed early in the spring, the vertical cover could also serve as nesting habitat for mallards, pintails, ring-necked pheasants and other ground-nesting birds.

Because of this potential direct benefit, Ducks Unlimited has launched a new effort to promote cover crops, providing cost-share assistance to landowners interested in trying them in areas that are important to waterfowl production.

To date, DU has already signed 21 contracts with private landowners to establish cover crops on over 2,300 acres in eastern South Dakota. Starting in 2017, DU biologists will begin a multi-year effort searching these fields to find duck nests (like the one pictured above in a cover crop from last spring) and monitor their success in this seasonal cover.

Landowners interested in learning more about DU's cover crop program should call Steve Donovan at (605) 633-0270.



## More facts on the benefits of cover crops:

- Cover crops can improve soil health in a variety of ways, including: improving carbon levels in soil, improving soil structure and water infiltration rates, and reducing nutrient loss.
- Cover crops can absorb excess nitrogen in the soil and store that nitrogen for later release to next year's crop, therefore reducing nitrogen loss and reducing the need to buy expensive fertilizer.
- In addition, by retaining that nitrogen in the farm field, it is not being lost to nearby rivers, streams and lakes, thereby improving water quality in those systems.
- Cover crops also improve soil structure and water infiltration rates so that soil is better able to absorb water during a heavy summer thunderstorm instead of losing water to surface runoff.



# Meet Bill Marketon, South Dakota DU's New State Chairman-Elect and State Council Chairman

My love for the outdoors began at an early age as I was introduced to fishing and hunting by family and friends. I was born, raised and graduated high school in Delano, Minn. It was a wonderful small community that was close to the big Metro. Most weekends were spent fishing in northern Minnesota near the town of Aitkin. Duck hunting became a passion more than 40 years ago, as I started that journey on my uncle's farm near Howard Lake. Luckily I have not missed a season of hitting the duck sloughs since then.

Upon graduation of high school, I decided to go to college at Bemidji State University in northern Minnesota. That college was chosen because it was in the woods and there was outstanding fishing and hunting just a short distance away. After four years, I successfully graduated with a degree in accounting and a minor in computer science. Then it was off to the big cities where I got my first real job with the CPA firm of McGladrey and Pullen. Luckily I was able to continue to feed my passion for the outdoors.

Years passed and jobs changed and then fate would provide



me with a chance to meet an incredibly beautiful young lady. That is when I met my wife Christy. Within ten months of dating, we decided to get married. Within three years we would have two boys, Jackson and Tyler. Christy was originally from Sioux Falls, so we spent many weekends visiting with her parents. I was lucky to be introduced to South Dakota pheasant hunting from

one of her relatives. The big cities were great for our careers and we had a wonderful time meeting people and doing fun things, but the time came to decide on where we wanted to raise our children. We made the move to South Dakota in 1995.

After settling in Hartford, our daughter Isabelle came along and our family was complete - two strapping boys and a princess.

What a joy to raise our family in such a wonderful state. We spent many weekends in the fall hitting the fields and sloughs of South Dakota. We also enjoyed the outdoor activities available in the Black Hills. My sons would always harvest bigger and better deer, but I have been able to outshoot them with the shotgun.

One day back in 1996 or so, I heard there was going to be Ducks Unlimited meeting at the Legion club in Hartford. Well, being a duck hunter, I thought I should go, and that night I was introduced to two legends in South Dakota Ducks Unlimited, Terry Boxdorfer and Don Knapp. They needed a treasurer and luckily I knew a little bit about that. The Hartford chapter has continued to grow under the leadership of Mark Lueth. We have such outstanding committee members that work to make the Hartford chapter a top performer. Several have stepped up to be Major Donors, including Terry and Lynda Boxdorfer, Mark and Cindy Lueth and Kent and Melinda Liesinger.

I currently am employed as CFO at Sheehan Mack in Sioux Falls. Our son Jackson lives in St. Paul

*Continued on page 6*

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and works in the IT world. Tyler is active duty Air Force and is stationed out of Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Isabelle is a sophomore at University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN. My darling wife and I just celebrated 25 fabulous years together. When we have time to reflect, we understand just how lucky and blessed we are.

Years have passed, jobs have changed and children have grown up. There have been some

constants during that time and that has been the relationships with our friends from DU. With the help from my wife, I look forward to increasing our presence with DU. We made the commitment financially by becoming Diamond Life Sponsors last year. We are humbled to accept the leadership role with SDDU as SD Chairman elect.

From Jeff Heidelberg:

During Bill's term as State

Chairman-elect (effective immediately) he will chair the State Council. This is a change for SDDU, as previously the Council has been chaired by the outgoing State Chair. This should be good for SDDU, as it will be a very good way for the State Chairman-elect to get deeply involved with what is happening in the state, and the Council will also benefit from the enthusiasm of the State Chair-elect. Please

help us to reinvigorate the State Council by actively participating.

Bill will take over as State Chairman at the State Convention in January, 2018. Bill's wife Christy plans to work closely with Bill during his leadership tenor with DU, so we will have the benefit of a team at the top. Please welcome Bill and Christy to their leadership roles in our South Dakota DU Family.

## Ducks Unlimited Announces a New Staff Addition

Ducks Unlimited is excited to announce the hiring of Maddie Saylor as a new engineer for the Great Plains Region.

Ms. Saylor came to the Great Plains region from DU's Great Lakes Regional Office in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where she has worked since July 2014. After some initial training in DU's Bismarck office, Maddie will likely be transferring to DU's South Dakota office in Brookings, providing some much needed additional engineering help to DU's South Dakota program.

Saylor's previous experience will be an important asset in the Prairie Pothole region, says Roger Smith, DU's director of engineering services in the Bismarck office.

"We've needed additional

engineering capacity due to the rapidly growing programs in both North and South Dakota," said Smith. "Her past experience with DU will allow her to hit the ground running."

Ducks Unlimited's Manager of Conservation Programs in South Dakota, Steve Donovan, is also excited about the new hire, noting that the expanded need for engineering work has caused unfortunate delays in DU's ability to put conservation on the ground.

"Our success in finding interested landowners and funding has been growing faster than our ability to get the work done, which is a very nice problem to have," said Donovan. "But adding Maddie to our staff will allow us to create and restore

habitats on these properties in a much more timely fashion."

Once Saylor is permanently located in Brookings, Donovan expects DU's ability to deliver conservation projects will significantly improve, which is

a great sign of things to come in South Dakota.

When she's not restoring wetlands, Saylor loves to duck hunt and ice fish.

"I think she'll fit right in with the DU crowd," Donovan said.





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# Ducks Unlimited supports Beadle County agriculture

DU and Beadle Conservation District offer farmers drill to plant cover crops

Ducks Unlimited is partnering with the Beadle Conservation District in South Dakota to promote cover crops and support conservation on agricultural lands in Beadle County.

DU recently acquired a special grass drill, called an InterSeeder, from local farmers Joe Fritzsche and Jeff Kelsey, with the help of a generous gift from First National Bank of Omaha. The grass drill will be given to the Beadle Conservation District and used by the District to promote and seed cover crops in the area.

“Cover crops are a relatively new concept around here,” said Robin Viestenz, Beadle Conservation District manager. “Cover crops are used for a variety of purposes, including improving soil health, adding nitrogen to the soil, reducing compaction and providing additional grazing opportunities.”

Fritzsche and Kelsey bought the drill a couple years ago and are such believers in cover crops they decided they needed to build a bigger one to seed more acres, which made their current InterSeeder available for this unique partnership. According to Jason Schley, a local farmer and crop consultant, June is the best time to use an InterSeeder because you can plant cover crops between rows of growing corn.

“It runs against conventional wisdom that you had to keep cornfields clean of any competition,” Schley said. “We are finding you can successfully plant cover crops and gain the benefits without hurting corn production by seeding at that time of year.”

Schley said cover crops have the potential to provide



additional economic returns to landowners by improving water infiltration, reducing soil temperatures during the hot summer months, and converting organic nutrients into inorganic nutrients that will help reduce fertilizer costs.

“Published research shows potential yield gains of up to seven bushels per acre in soybeans the year following an interseeded cover crop in corn,” he said.

Steve Donovan, DU’s South Dakota manager of conservation programs, says Ducks Unlimited is excited about the conservation benefits cover crops provide to water quality and soil health, but he says there is another possible benefit that is even more intriguing.

“In certain situations, cover crops might also provide suitable nesting cover for ducks and other ground nesting birds,” Donovan said. “We have long considered corn and soybean

A vertical advertisement for Graham Tire Store. The top section has a blue background with the word "GRAHAM" in large white letters, and "YOUR TIRE STORE NEXT DOOR" in smaller white letters below it. Below this, there are logos for Goodyear, Cooper Tires, Kelly's Tires, and Dunlop. The middle section has a white background with the text "You're in GRAHAM COUNTRY" in a bold, italicized font. Below this, there are two columns of text listing locations and phone numbers. The bottom section has a blue background with the word "GRAHAM" in large white letters, and "YOUR TIRE STORE NEXT DOOR" in smaller white letters below it. The entire advertisement is framed by a border of various tire tread patterns.

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fields as not providing suitable habitat for nesting birds because they lack any cover during the critical early nesting season under more traditional farming methods. But if corn and soybeans are planted into standing cover, ducks and other species like ring-necked pheasants might find it to be suitable nesting cover.”

Last spring, Ducks Unlimited personnel searched a few local cover crop fields and found ducks nesting in every one. Based on that initial look, Ducks Unlimited is

planning to implement a full research project in 2017 with the assistance of South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks and

South Dakota State University. Cover crops will be searched for nesting ducks and other species and monitored for success.



“We are excited about this work. Millions of South Dakota acres are planted to corn and soybeans each year,” Donovan added. “If we can figure out how to farm corn and soybeans in a way that might be friendlier to nesting birds, it could be a boon to wildlife.”

Area producers interested in this program and using the InterSeeder should call Viestenz at (605) 352-2998.

## Ducks Unlimited Receives \$1 Million NAWCA Grant

In September the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission approved Ducks Unlimited’s Eastern South Dakota Phase II proposal, awarding \$1 million to complete a series of wetland restoration and enhancement projects throughout the project area.

The funds are provided through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, federal legislation that provides grant dollars to groups like Ducks Unlimited to conserve important wetland habitats throughout North America. The projects that will be accomplished through the grant include a number of permanent conservation easements that will permanently protect hundreds of acres of important waterfowl habitat. Funding will also be used to restore previously drained wetlands and grassland habitats, including on land owned by Ducks Unlimited.

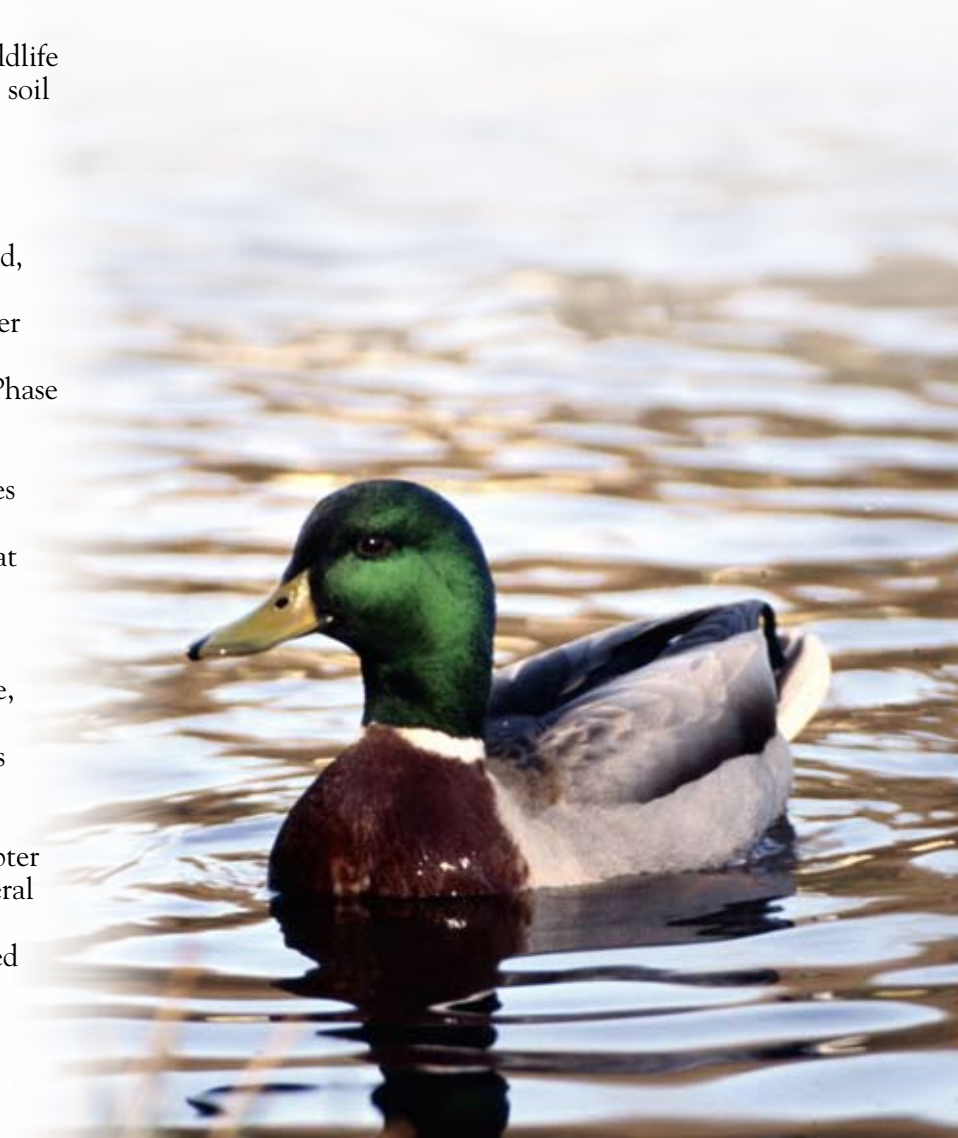
Funding is also available to kick start DU’s new “cover crop” program, which provides funds to farmers who are interested in using cover crops as part of their

farming strategy. Cover crops offer significant benefits to wildlife while also helping to improve soil health and water quality.

In addition, grant funds are also available for DU to work with landowners to improve grazing systems on private land, enhancing grassland habitat for nesting waterfowl and other wildlife species.

The Eastern South Dakota Phase II project involves a number of partnering conservation organizations, including: James River Water Development District; South Dakota Habitat Conservation Fund; Wildlife Conservation Society; Beadle and Davison Conservation Districts; South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks; Izaak Walton League of America; Brookings Wildlife Federation; Marshall County Sportsman’s Club; Northern South Dakota Chapter of Pheasants Forever and several private landowners.

All of these partners provided important “matching” funds, enabling DU to leverage the NAWCA grant to put more habitat on the ground.





# James River Water Development District to Help DU Fund Wetland Project at Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge

Vital habitat for migrating waterfowl will get a boost thanks to a partnership forged in northeastern South Dakota.

The James River Water Development District (JRWDD) recently approved a request for funding from Ducks Unlimited to be used to help replace a failing water control structure that services a wetland located near the southern end of the Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Brown County. This 80-ac wetland was originally created with the help of DU in the late 1980's, when an earthen dike was built and associated water control structures were installed to allow water to flow into the wetland from the James River when downstream flows were high.

"We are happy to be a partner on this project that, when completed, will once again help reduce negative impacts of flooding to downstream areas along the James River," said Dave Bartel, Manager of the JRWDD.

Over the course of the past few years the corrugated metal pipes and metal screw gates on the old structure have begun to rust through and are no longer functional. The new structure to be installed will be comprised of concrete and aluminum to increase the longevity of the structure by 2-3 times of the previously installed water control structure.

The \$50,000 in funding provided by the JRWDD and a \$10,000 pledge from the US Fish

and Wildlife Service will be used to cover the cost to purchase and install the new water control structure. DU will provide funds to cover additional construction costs and will also offer survey, design, and engineering services towards the project.

"The completed project will allow Refuge staff to better manage water levels of the wetland that will result in improved habitat conditions for migratory birds and other resident wildlife," said Eric Hoggarth, Assistant Sand Lake Refuge Manager.

A portion of the wetland lies within

a Waterfowl Production Area immediately adjacent to the refuge and will be open to public access for hunting and other recreational opportunities on this segment of the wetland. Construction of the project is planned to begin in the late fall of 2016 and be completed by spring of 2017.



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For more information on the convention and to register visit [www.ducks.org](http://www.ducks.org) click on South Dakota and the local events tab. Bring your beach attire and we'll see you there



  
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**So come have fun and support waterfowl conservation!**



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# Fulfilling the DU Vision

By Don Thorpe

In the movie "The Rookie" Dennis Quaid played the role of a high school baseball coach who dreams of playing major league baseball. In his quest, he faces many challenges that discourage him, and at one point he contemplates

giving up his dream. Then he watches a little league baseball game and it rekindles his dream. He goes to the clubhouse and tells one of his teammates it is a great day because they are going to play baseball. He goes on to fulfill his dream and plays for the Florida Marlins.

This story is very similar to the role of a Ducks Unlimited volunteer, as we strive to fulfill Ducks Unlimited's vision. When we plan for our events we must overcome various challenges; whether it is the competition for attendees, nightly gloom and doom reports on the news or other demands on our time. We can easily become discouraged and question our efforts, but then we see the wonders of the fall migration as the ducks and geese head south to their wintering grounds. Our dreams and vision are rekindled. It is truly a great day because we can help Ducks Unlimited ensure that future generations will be able to witness these migrations and carry on our waterfowl heritage.

The work we do for conservation has never been more important than it is today. Surging global demands for food, federal mandates for corn-based ethanol production and the current Farm Bill have all put pressure on our nation's farmers to convert more and more acres of grassland to



cropland. The majority of ducks harvested across North America are produced in the grasslands stretching from South Dakota, North Dakota up in to Canada. There is a backlog of grassland easements needing funding across this area. We are in a race to protect this precious resource that fuels our waterfowl heritage.

What can you as waterfowl hunter do to help this cause? Join your local DU committee. If there is no chapter in your hometown, take the initiative to start a chapter.

What can a DU committees do to overcome the challenges of the coming event season? We can start by aggressively pre-selling tickets to fill the halls at our events. We can continue to maximize our efficiency by utilizing the budget planner and soliciting underwriting. Implement annual volunteer recruitment programs to build a solid foundation for our committees.

Remember, it is our children, grandchildren, great grandchildren that will benefit from our efforts today. So let's work together to protect the future of our waterfowl heritage.

To volunteer for your local chapter or to help start a chapter in your hometown contact Don Thorpe at 605-630-8696 or email dthorpe@ducks.org.





DUCKS UNLIMITED

# HELP WANTED

**DU Needs Chapters Help in the Following Locations**

Ducks Unlimited is looking for dedicated sportsmen and women to become volunteers and to bring the excitement of DU to their communities.

If you would enjoy working with others for the benefit of North America's wetlands and waterfowl, contact us today and make a real difference in South Dakota and across North America. Bring DU to your town and help ensure a bright future to the continent's ducks and geese.

If you are interested in helping put on a dinner in any of these cities or know someone who might help, contact our staff:

Target locations for events are:

- So. Union County • Redfield
- Milbank Area • Clear Lake • Highmore

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