



DU Leque Island Project Dedication

Ducks Unlimited is proud to honor our Major Donors for their commitment and passion for wetland and waterfowl conservation.



For the first time in 135 years, ocean water flowed onto Leque Island in Washington when Ducks Unlimited and partners breached an island dike bordering the island as part of Phase II of the Leque Island Restoration project, a significant milestone that took 15 years to complete.

Much of Leque Island was historically a saltwater marsh that provided important habitat for many species, including juvenile salmon, shorebirds, and waterfowl. Settlers built dikes in the early 1900s around the perimeter of the island to create farmland. By the 1970s, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife began purchasing land on the island to become part of the Skagit Wildlife Area, which today is now a popular spot for waterfowl and waterfowling.

Ducks Unlimited's Phase I's original work at Leque included excavating many miles of new channels, filling ditches, and building small mounds, which created habitat complexity, muted waves, and directed water draining from the site away from neighbors.

All of Ducks Unlimited's projects rely on partnerships, and the restoration of Leque Island is no exception. DU is extremely appreciative of our partnership with WDFW, and of the support that has been given to the project over the years from numerous partners including NOAA-National Marine Fisheries Service, The Nature Conservancy, Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Shell Oil Company, and private donors.

DUCKS UNLIMITED: *Making an Impact in the Pacific Northwest*

CONSERVATION

Restoring and protecting wetlands on public and private lands that improve habitat quality, provide ample food resources for waterfowl and benefits people.

SCIENCE

Conducting scientific research to guide our efforts and build our knowledge of water, habitat and waterfowl relationships.

POLICY

Advocating strong public policies that promote waterfowl-friendly land uses and ensure multi-benefit water use policies.

The Leque Island Restoration Project consisted of removing over 2.4 miles of levee. With the levees removed, 250 acres of tidal marsh habitat in the Stillaguamish

River watershed have now been restored. This is an area where 85 percent of historic tidal marsh has been displaced. Estuaries such as Leque Island are important for waterfowl, shorebirds and a variety of other species. In addition, juvenile Chinook salmon rely on this habitat as they transition from fresh to salt water.

Moving forward, the project site will take care of itself as it reverts back to its original origin. Today Leque Island is a popular destination for outdoor recreationists as a new 17 car parking lot located off Eide Road is open as well as a new kayak boat launch at the Davis Slough parking lot.

To recognize the Leque Island Restoration Project, we will dedicate a plaque in honor of DU's Partners & Major Donors who help protect our wetland habitats!



Wings and Wetlands

INITIATIVE



People and ducks flock to the Pacific Northwest in large part because it is home to some of the most spectacular terrain in America -- including coastal estuaries, seasonal wetlands, and floodplain marshes. However, significant wetland habitats have already been lost, and as human populations soar and the demand for water increases, even more pressure is exerted on those wetlands that remain.

For the region's birds, the greatest challenges come in their migration and wintering areas. From Puget Sound, where more than 80 percent of wetlands have already been lost, to the Southern Oregon/Northeastern California (SONEC) area, which serves as a massive gathering place for migrating waterfowl, and on to the extensive floodplains and marshes of the upper Snake River basin of Eastern Idaho, including Henry's Fork Watershed, Ducks Unlimited is collaborating with state and government agencies, Native American tribes, and private landowners to deliver habitat restoration and protection.

For the long-term, DU is developing strategies to offset coastal habitat loss from sea-level rise that will benefit hundreds of thousands of ducks, geese, and swans. In some areas, conservation staff are also

addressing water shortages and unreliable water supplies and delivery systems to ensure and maintain flood-irrigated habitat to meet waterfowl needs each spring.

Through the Wings and Wetlands Initiative, DU is making an impact on these critical issues:

- Increasing capacity of managed wetlands to support migrating and wintering waterfowl
- Conserving working lands in the Intermountain West important to spring migrating waterfowl
- Increasing resiliency of coastal habitats to sea-level rise
- Scientific research and public policy issues critical to wetlands and waterfowl
- Conserving approximately 3,000-5,000 acres of wetlands on the ground annually

Act now – your support is essential to helping us to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever.

Participation Options:

TO BE LISTED ON THE PLAQUE:

- Make a new Life Sponsor or upgrade commitment, payable over up to five years, including your cumulative giving.
- Make a new or upgrade planned gift commitment of \$5,000 or more
- Make a cash gift or pledge payment of \$10,000 or more

To make a gift online, please visit:

<https://www.ducks.org/LeadersInGiving>

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