



80 Years of Conservation

DU CONSERVATION REPORT 2017

(WYOMING)

In 2016, Ducks Unlimited and partners expanded wetland conservation efforts in Wyoming. Partnerships with the Environmental Protection Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, North American Wetlands Conservation Commission, Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD), Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust (WWNRT), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and major donors have generated more than \$6 million aimed at improving wetlands in Wyoming.

While many of the proposed projects are in the design phase and delivery is several years away, this focus on wetland conservation in Wyoming means improved habitat for migratory birds and recreational opportunities for the public.

A key DU project is at Table Mountain Wildlife Habitat Management Area (WHMA) near Hawk Springs. The purpose of this large, multi-year project is to improve water management capabilities on the WHMA. Ducks Unlimited collaborated with WGFD and WWNRT to replace the head gate of the main supply ditch, facilitating water delivery to Ponds 1 and 2 and the rest of the WHMA. Ducks Unlimited replaced water-control structures at all ponds on the WHMA and installed several hundred feet of pipe to deliver water to the ponds.

DU and partners conserved 577 acres of irrigated meadow and riparian wetland habitat in Wyoming during FY16. Projects were completed in Carbon, Goshen, Lincoln and Uinta counties. Projects planned for FY17 will occur in Albany, Fremont, Goshen, Lincoln, Natrona and Teton counties.

*White pelicans on Table Mountain
Wildlife Habitat Management Area.*



STEVE TESSMAN - WYOMING GAME & FISH DEPT.



Friends honor the contributions of Engrav family

Eugene "Gene" and Fayline Engrav are dedicated Ducks Unlimited volunteers and have been the heart of DU in Wyoming since the mid-90s. When they moved from Rockford, Illinois, to Cheyenne, Gene and Fayline quickly inserted themselves into the DU community. Gene became the state chair and later served as major donor chair for the state. Fayline served as the Greenwing chair for the Cheyenne Chapter and became known as "Granny Duck."

While Gene was state chair, he and Fayline strived to attend every banquet in the state to volunteer and support the local chapters. Gene's inspiration to support DU came from a trip to Calgary, Alberta, Canada, for Ducks University in the mid-90s. There he saw the habitats ducks need to survive and what was happening to those habitats that could threaten their survival.

"If you don't take care of it, it won't be here for the future," said Gene.

Because of Gene and Fayline's work and dedication to DU and conservation of wetlands, their friends wanted to honor them in a way that would reflect their passions for the outdoors and leave a legacy for future generations to enjoy. Ducks Unlimited volunteers and fundraising staff organized a Major Sponsor tribute event celebrating the Engrav's generosity, furthering their legacy of conservation support.

The event raised more than \$250,000 to support DU's Peaks to Prairies, Preserve our Prairies, and Heartland Habitat and Heritage initiatives. The funds were used to leverage more than \$2 million for conservation efforts throughout Wyoming. A dedication plaque was erected at Table Mountain Wildlife Habitat Management Area where funds were used to build a head gate to supply water to the wetlands.

"We also used the Engrav Tribute funds to leverage a \$1 million Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service for southeast Wyoming, which helped DU hire its first biologist for Wyoming," said Martin Grenier, manager of DU's conservation programs in Wyoming.

HISTORIC OCEAN LAKE RECEIVES RESCUE OUR WETLANDS SIGNATURE PROJECT DEDICATION

Ocean Lake is one of the largest lakes in Wyoming and a significant migratory stopover for birds in the Central Flyway. Ducks Unlimited partnered with the WGFD, to restore seasonal wetlands and improve water delivery to wetlands at the site.

"During fall and spring migrations, up to 3,000 geese, 400 sandhill cranes and more than 10,000 ducks use the area," said Martin Grenier, DU manager of

conservation programs for Wyoming and Colorado.

The Ocean Lake Wildlife Habitat Management Area has plentiful outdoor recreation opportunities, including waterfowl, pheasant and dove hunting, fishing, trapping, boating, camping and hiking. The lake was created by the Riverton Reclamation Project in the early 1920s. The WGFD partnered with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to manage the

area for waterfowl habitat. Ducks Unlimited chose Ocean Lake as its signature Wyoming project for the *Rescue Our Wetlands* campaign because of its significance to waterfowl in the state. As part of the campaign, DU is choosing a project site in each state that represents DU's work and the habitats that support North American waterfowl.

DU is overseeing the project, including survey and design. Construction is underway

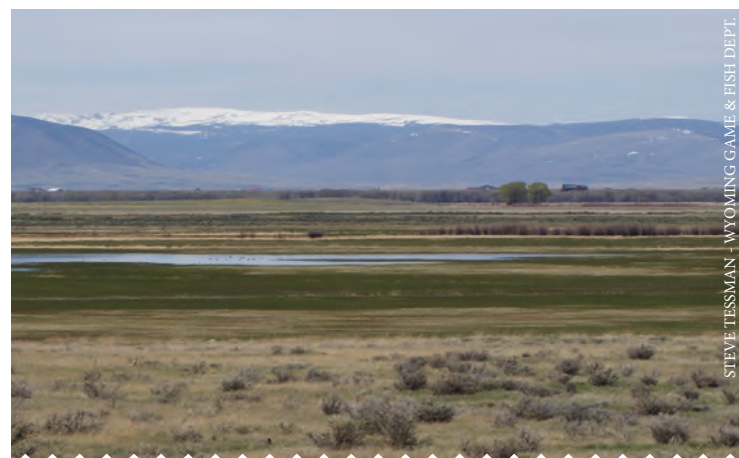
to restore 60 acres of shallow water wetlands. A small North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant was awarded to fund this project, along with federal, state, private, and DU major sponsor contributions from Howard and Peggy Johnson. Other partners and funders on the project are the Lower Wind River Conservation District, Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust Fund, Water for Wildlife, and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

PATHFINDER NAWCA GRANT OPENS CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES

Ducks Unlimited, together with 16 other organizations, established the Pathfinder Wetlands Partnership. The partnership was awarded Wyoming's second standard North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant. The \$1 million grant, which included \$2.8 million in match from partners, will restore, enhance and protect more than 2,800 acres of wetlands in southeast Wyoming and western Nebraska. An additional 3,500 acres of associated uplands will be impacted by this grant, which aims to conserve wetlands and other habitats important to non-breeding migratory bird populations in the North Platte River basin.

Several projects included in the NAWCA grant proposal are on public lands that offer access for hunting and other outdoor recreation. One project, in partnership with the City of Laramie, has a goal of improving recreation opportunities, including wildlife viewing, fishing and hunting. Restoration will focus on wetlands and water management to provide habitat for migrating birds.

DU and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation will place conservation easements on two properties that will protect the land's wildlife habitat in perpetuity. Both properties are near other protected areas owned separately by U.S. Forest Service, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, and the Wyoming State Trust. These easements will provide critical habitat connectivity through riverine-associated wetlands and uplands in the Little Laramie River corridor.



Canada geese and dabbling duck species during spring migration on the Bump Sullivan Wildlife Habitat Management Area.



Palustrine emergent wetlands on the Monolith Ranch.



TOM PETERSON TRANSITIONS FROM NEBRASKA TO WYOMING BIOLOGIST

Tom Peterson, former DU biologist in Nebraska, has accepted a new position as the Wyoming biologist. Tom and his wife, Bethany, relocated to Fort Collins, Colorado, joining the Colorado-Wyoming conservation team. This position was made possible by a \$1 million Regional

Conservation Partnership Program grant from USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and contributions from the Engrav Tribute.

Tom's experience with the Platte River, passion for waterfowl and their habitats, and his ability to

communicate effectively with private landowners, conservation partners and DU donors will accelerate the delivery of conservation projects in Wyoming. Tom will continue to assist the Nebraska office and lead DU's conservation delivery in western Nebraska.

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CHRIS HILDEBRANDT is the director of development for Montana, North Dakota, and Wyoming. He has worked for Ducks Unlimited for more than 19 years. Shortly after receiving a degree in wildlife management from Humboldt State University, Chris began his career with DU as a private lands biologist in the Prairie Pothole Region of southeast North Dakota. Several years later, Chris migrated west to oversee DU's conservation program in southern California and Arizona. He has contributed to the conservation of more than 175,000 acres of wetlands and associated waterfowl habitat.

Chris transitioned to his new role in 2015 and is serving DU's mission by cultivating lasting relationships with DU supporters to increase major gifts and put more waterfowl habitat on the ground. He and his family are located in Belgrade, Montana, where they enjoy camping, hiking, kayaking, hunting and fishing.

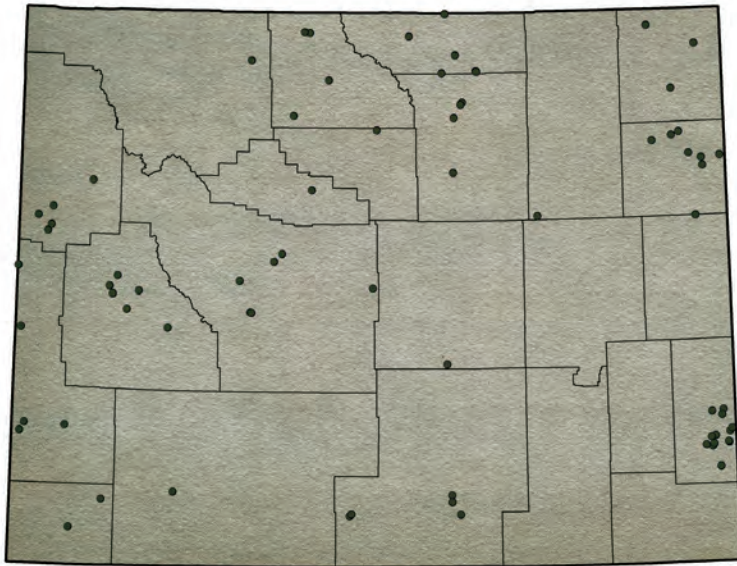


Chris with his wife Malia and daughter Chloe.

ducks unlimited WY PROJECTS 1986-2016

● Completed

Note: Project points may represent more than one project.



in **2016** | 577 acres conserved • \$356,890 invested

WY STATE CONTACTS

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our mission

Ducks Unlimited conserves, restores, and manages wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people.