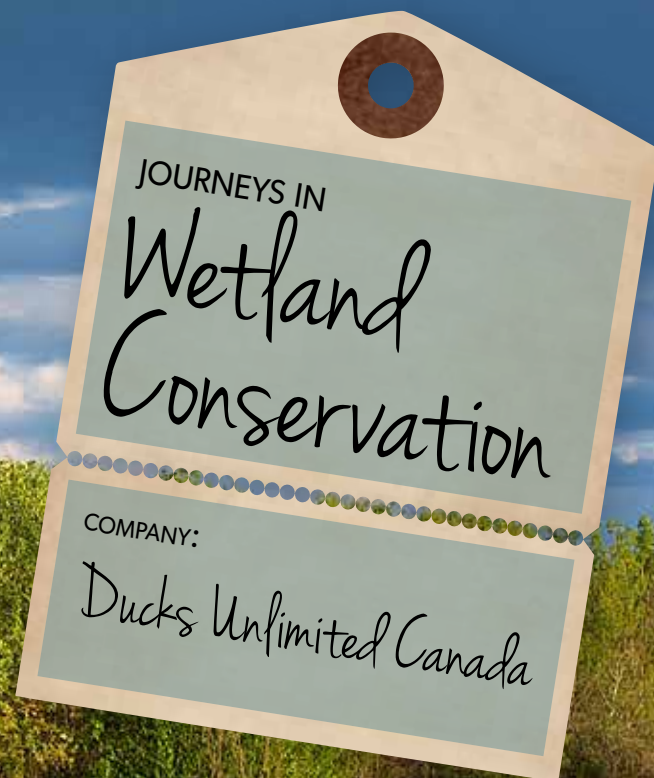




Ducks Unlimited Canada
Conserving Canada's Wetlands



A N N U A L R E P O R T 2 0 1 5



There's an
amazing world
out there



It's vibrant

It has a voice



It's mysterious and
captivating





It stirs memories
and creates
new ones.



Go...introduce yourself



Our vision

Abundant wetlands and waterfowl – today, tomorrow and forever.

Our mission

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

Our difference

Every program we deliver is rooted in sound science. Our conservation efforts begin in your backyard, extend across the country and cover the entire continent. We are transparent and trustworthy. We are creative and collaborative. We have a 77-year history of success that lives in the hearts and minds of people who share our love for the outdoors.



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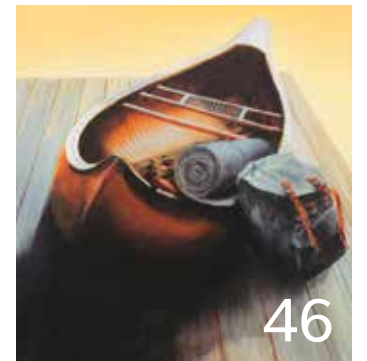
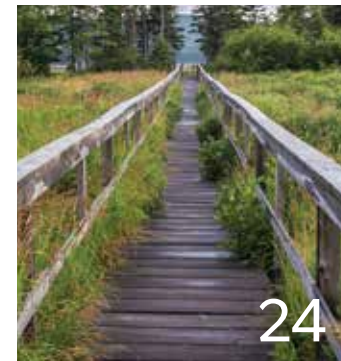
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Message from the President and Chairman of the Board

Your journey awaits

Beyond our backyards, past paved streets and far away from glowing TV screens are remarkable wild areas. They're lush, green and teeming with life. They're Canada's wetlands.

Wetlands are some of the best places to experience nature. Birdwatching, hiking, hunting and fishing promise unique glimpses of plants and animals in their natural habitat. Behind the scenes, wetlands are working for the environment, providing a host of benefits we can't live without. This includes clean water to drink, flood protection for communities and healthy lakes and rivers.

But the real power of wetlands is how they inspire people. Their beauty, diversity and ability to deliver outdoor adventures of all kinds capture our imaginations and keep us coming back.

Throughout 2015, Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) encouraged people to get outside and discover what makes wetlands both fascinating and essential. Our achievements are changing the relationship Canadians have with their environment by inviting them to embark on their own journeys in wetland conservation.

And these achievements have been significant. We've influenced policies at local, provincial and federal levels that benefit water and wildlife. Discoveries in wetland research have furthered our understanding of these remarkable ecosystems – and equipped us with knowledge to better conserve them. Our partners continue boosting our education programming and our volunteers are shining as local ambassadors who are finding new and innovative ways to connect people to our cause.

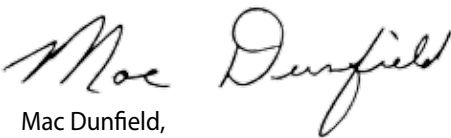
All of these things are providing Canadians with more opportunities and more reasons to experience the wonder of wetlands for themselves. Every canoe trip, every hunting excursion and every time a birdsong makes you pause and gaze toward the sky represents a journey that will reveal the power and importance of our wetland conservation mission.

So grab a pair of binoculars and rubber boots, invite your friends and family and head toward the bulrushes and blue water. We guarantee you'll be both amazed and inspired.

Yours in conservation,



Tom Worden,
Chairman of the Board



Mac Dunfield,
President



Oak Hammock Marsh Interpretive Centre, Manitoba

Our community

We're backed by passionate people who are leading and inspiring others.

110,799

Grassroots supporters

58,291

Event attendees

5,289

Volunteers

36,470

Students¹

424

Annual fundraising events

17,917

Landowners²

370

Staff

¹ Young people taking part in our suite of education programs.

² Farmers, ranchers and others conserving habitat in partnership with DUC.

Our conservation success

We're delivering results you can wade in and walk on.

6.4

Million acres of
habitat secured¹
(2.6 million hectares)

127

Million acres of habitat
positively influenced²
(51.4 million hectares)

9,726

Habitat projects completed

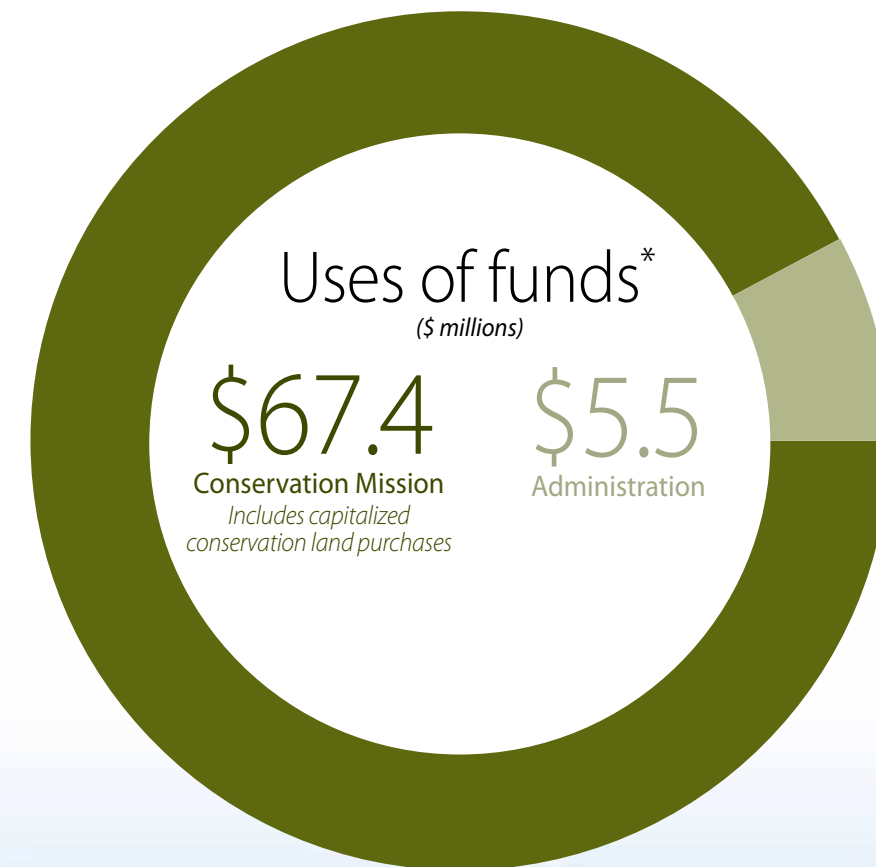
¹ Through land purchase, management agreements, conservation easements and leases.

² Through retention or restoration measures of less than 10 years or policy projects.

Our commitment

We respect our donors and partners, and achieve the greatest conservation impact by using funds wisely.

In the 2015 fiscal year, DUC invested 92 per cent of available dollars in habitat conservation, research, public policy and education.



* does not include \$15.6 million in fundraising and philanthropic expenses

Sources of funds

(\$ millions)

Government grants

\$32.6

Non-government partners

\$11.9

Program and other

\$10.9

Investment income

\$15.0

Philanthropic giving

\$7.3

Grassroots

\$13.4

Lines of credit
accessed for revolving
land purchases

\$6.8

Imagine
Canada Ethical Code

DUC follows the Imagine Canada Ethical Code Program and adheres to a set of standards developed for charities to manage and report their financial affairs responsibly.

A natural and sustainable landscape

DESTINATION: *Niverville, Manitoba*



An old sewage lagoon on the outskirts of town isn't your typical roadside attraction. But thanks to decommissioning work by DUC's Native Plant Solutions, the view is altogether different.

Stop and listen to the rustle of cattails growing thick around the wetland now standing in its place. Your senses will be surprised by the fresh air, croaking toads and buzzing dragonflies. The transformation into an attractive, safe and productive destination is one you have to see to believe – and you'll soon have the opportunity. The town of Niverville hopes to reopen the site as a birdwatching area and an interpretive site for school groups and residents.

In a first-of-its-kind project, the lagoon is being cleaned up using native plants to remove contaminants. It's a natural solution that earned Native Plant Solutions and the town of Niverville the 2014 Manitoba Excellence in Sustainability Award for Innovation and Research.

Native Plant Solutions is a consulting arm of DUC. Its team of wetland, upland and engineering specialists deliver leading-edge environmental solutions such as green roofs, naturalized stormwater ponds, native grass establishment, wetland construction and wastewater treatment to clients across the country.



Before



DUC's habitat conservation work is part of a continental approach stretching from Canada's Far North to the southern climes of Mexico. Conserving, restoring and maintaining important landscapes – like those in Niverville, Man. and all across the continent – requires a diverse set of conservation tools. Here are a few that have been particularly successful in 2015.

Revolving Land Conservation Program

A new approach to how we deliver wetland conservation is making a big impact. The Revolving Land Conservation Program (RLCP) allows DUC to purchase land, restore the wetlands and grasslands on the property and then sell it back to producers with a perpetual conservation easement that secures these values forever. It's a cycle that helps keep land in private ownership, acknowledges the needs of a working landscape and provides landowners with opportunities to incorporate conservation into their business.

To date, DUC has purchased 70 properties in the Prairies and successfully transitioned 23 of them through the RLCP. As a result, more than 6,037 acres (2,444 hectares) of wetlands and uplands have been conserved in perpetuity via conservation easements. Financial partnerships with ATB Financial, The Conservation Fund and CIBC have provided DUC with important capital to kickstart the program. *See Saskatchewan section for more info.*



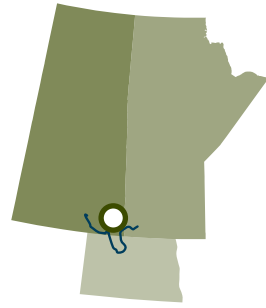
Leveraging our expertise through mitigation

Whether it's road construction or urban expansion, landscape alterations are a reality in rapidly growing areas of the country. As a result, demand for mitigation work is growing. DUC is an ideal partner to deliver wetland restoration work and we continue to leverage our expertise with industry groups.

In Alberta, developers are required to offset their impacts by restoring three wetland acres for every one destroyed. Similar mitigation programs are well established in Atlantic Canada. Results are infusing important environmental functions back into the landscape.

Downstream discoveries

DESTINATION: *Souris River Watershed*



Follow the winding path of the Souris River. Its waters will transport you through a colourful patchwork of wheat, canola and barley fields. Paddle through the Yellow Grass Marshes near Weyburn, Saskatchewan before meandering down through North Dakota and north again into Manitoba. Along the way you may notice tears in the patchwork: trenches directing water off the land and into the river. Efforts to maximize agriculture production in these areas are contributing to wetland drainage. But what does this mean for our water?

With decreased natural water storage on fields, runoff carries sediments, nutrients and chemicals directly into the river system. This leaves people living downstream bearing the burden of dirty, polluted water.

DUC research, by the Institute for Wetland and Waterfowl Research, in the Souris River Watershed is discovering the effects of wetland drainage on downstream communities. It's comparing water quality and quantity to areas where wetlands remain largely intact. Results are informing political decision makers about the important role wetlands play in keeping water sources healthy throughout the entire watershed. It's helping mend the tears in this agricultural landscape to ensure that whatever state, province or country the Souris River leads you to, you'll find clean water when you get there.

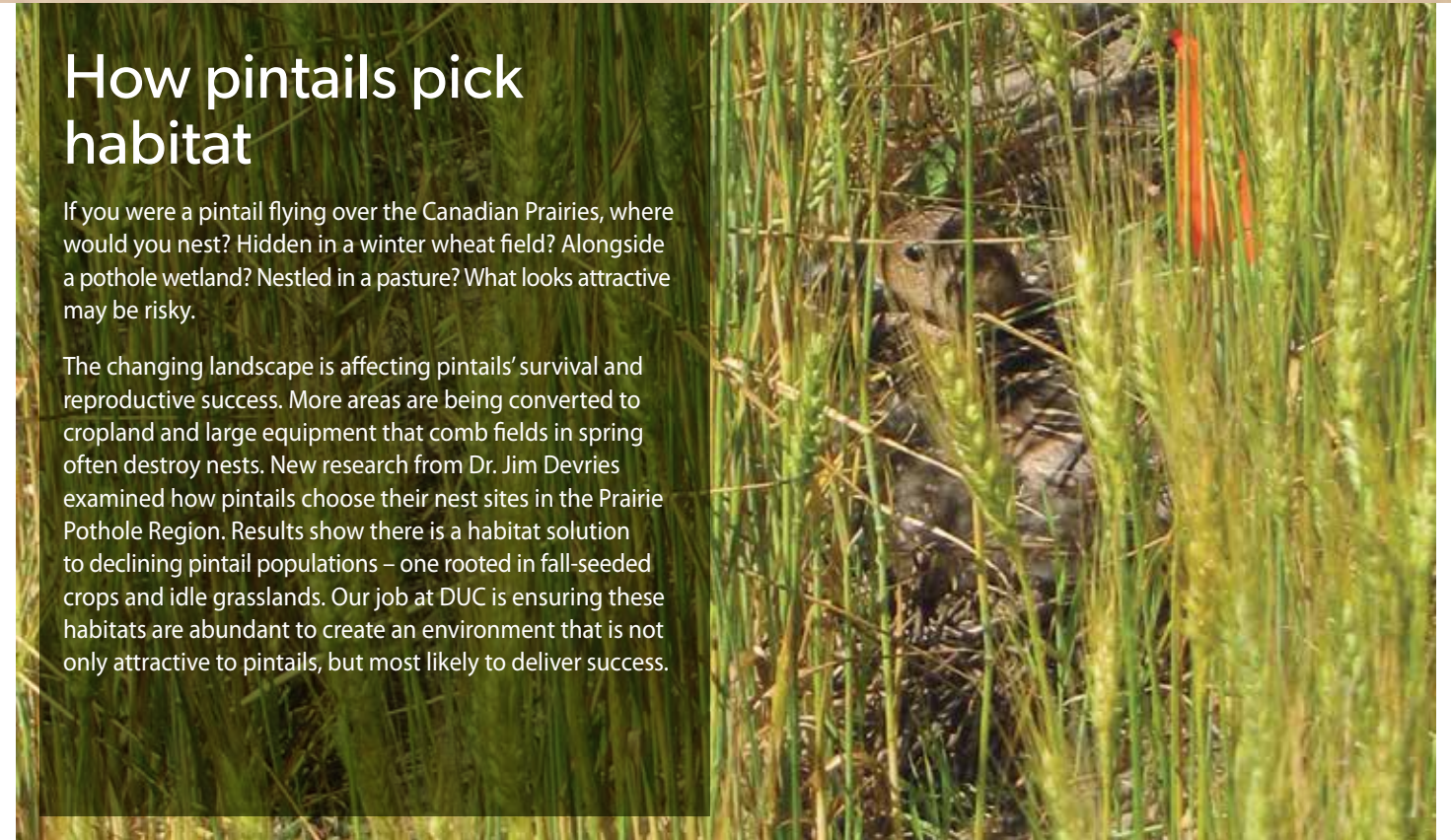


DUC scientists are discovering the impacts of human activity on our surroundings. Like our work in the Souris River Watershed, these discoveries guide how we conserve land and water. Here are a few other research highlights from the year – straight from the labs of our biologists.

How pintails pick habitat

If you were a pintail flying over the Canadian Prairies, where would you nest? Hidden in a winter wheat field? Alongside a pothole wetland? Nestled in a pasture? What looks attractive may be risky.

The changing landscape is affecting pintails' survival and reproductive success. More areas are being converted to cropland and large equipment that comb fields in spring often destroy nests. New research from Dr. Jim Devries examined how pintails choose their nest sites in the Prairie Pothole Region. Results show there is a habitat solution to declining pintail populations – one rooted in fall-seeded crops and idle grasslands. Our job at DUC is ensuring these habitats are abundant to create an environment that is not only attractive to pintails, but most likely to deliver success.



Giving wings to grad students

Young scientists are the future. DUC is supporting seven talented students through our graduate fellowship program, and helping launch their careers in wetland and waterfowl conservation. These students are at the top of their classes, having been selected from a highly competitive process. They're pursuing important research across the continent and travelling to some spectacular destinations. From studying the changing climate in Canada's Far North to the impacts of oil development and agriculture in the Prairies, these bright minds are finding answers to questions important to wildlife and our world.



Amelia J. Raquel
2015 Spencer T. and Ann W. Olin Fellowship



David Johns
2015 DUC-MBNA Canada Bank Conservation Fellowship



Christopher Malachowski
2015 Dr. Bruce DJ Batt Fellowship in Waterfowl Conservation



Jennifer Provencher
2015 Bonnycastle Fellowship in Wetland and Waterfowl Biology

Lessons in conservation leadership

DESTINATION: *Wetland Centres of Excellence*



Imagine a place where learning comes to life. A place where students lead their own projects and make their own discoveries. A place where lessons about water, wildlife and the natural world involve pulling on a pair of hip waders and striding out into a marsh.

Did you imagine your child's classroom? Did you imagine any classroom? If not, you've got to visit a Wetland Centre of Excellence. These schools are partnering with DUC to take environmental education to a new level with outdoor classrooms that promote both learning and leadership.

DUC's Wetland Centres of Excellence program encourages students to create their own long-term conservation

project using a local wetland. Currently, 23 schools across Canada are engaging their students in unique hands-on work.

Students get involved in bird banding and provide information to researchers. They're creating new wetlands, building boardwalks and carrying out other habitat improvements at wetlands near their schools. They're also sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm with younger students by leading them on field trips at their wetland project. Students who are part of the program are also encouraged to speak up for wetlands – to be a voice for conservation in their communities.

DUC education programs are shaping conservation leaders for today and tomorrow. In addition to Wetland Centres of Excellence, here are a few special programs and partnerships that are helping build promising futures for our country's youngest conservationists.

Hunting for the next generation

Not many kids look forward to a 5 a.m. wake up call. But the sights and sounds of a marsh coming alive at sunrise can quickly change their tune. Learning how to hunt is sparking their interest in wildlife and the outdoors. It's often the beginning of a lifelong commitment to conservation.

DUC's mentored hunt program is passing on waterfowling traditions and introducing youth to ethical hunting in a safe environment. Over the past year, the program worked with partners in every province to deliver 20 mentored hunts with 279 novice hunters and 175 volunteer mentors. It also supported 20 waterfowling-related events like carving and cooking classes and retriever trials, which were attended by 2,366 participants.



RBC Blue Water

Water is precious. It's both powerful and fragile. Our partners at the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) recognize that wetlands underpin almost every aspect of our water's health. Together, we're helping people and communities understand these connections.

The RBC Blue Water Project is a 10-year global commitment to help protect the world's fresh water. DUC was chosen as a funding recipient this year and received \$100,000 to further urban wetland education efforts in Saskatoon, Sask. The project will provide opportunities for people to learn more about wetlands and water by visiting local city wetlands.

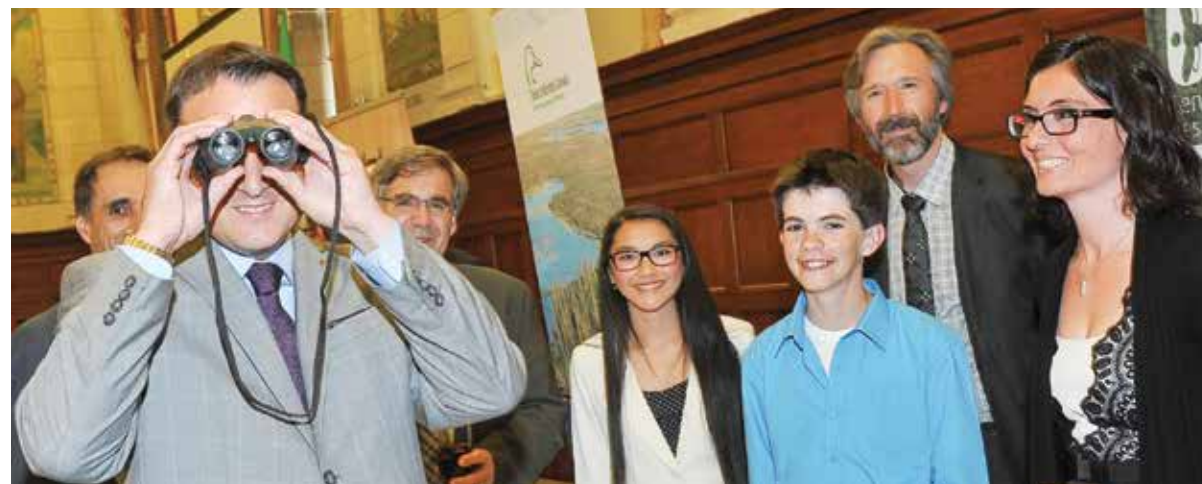


Lobbying for wetlands

DESTINATION: *Parliament Hill*

Visit the heart of Canadian democracy. Feel your patriotic side swell at the sight of Parliament Hill's elegant arched ceilings and long gleaming hallways. Inside the storied meeting rooms, history is being made as issues of the day are debated and new policies are created. It's a place that means something to every Canadian. DUC is proud to be taking an active role in shaping the future of wetland conservation through our public policy efforts in the nation's capital.

In June 2014, DUC directors, volunteers and staff took to the Hill for one-on-one meetings with members of Parliament and senior civil servants. It was an opportunity to showcase our work while demonstrating the need for ongoing investments in wetland conservation. Later that day, we hosted a reception in the historic Reading Room inside the Centre Block of the Parliament Buildings to celebrate our ongoing partnership and the newly launched National Conservation Plan. A keen group of students from our Wetland Centres of Excellence also joined in the festivities to demonstrate the importance of wetland conservation to their generation.



DUC is a strong partner in public policy development. We work with all levels of government and provide recommendations that inform important pieces of conservation legislation like these:

National Conservation Plan

Policy achievements like this don't come around often. In May 2014, the Government of Canada unveiled its \$252-million National Conservation Plan, which acknowledged the importance of wetlands like never before.

Key components of the plan include:

- A new **wetland conservation fund** valued at \$50 million over five years.
- A \$100-million (five-year, \$20 million per year) renewal of the **Natural Areas Conservation Plan**.
- \$50 million over five years earmarked for voluntary conservation efforts that maximize **habitat stewardship** on private lands.
- A \$16-million commitment to **marine and coastal conservation**.
- A new \$10-million fund to **connect Canadians to nature**.
- A \$3-million commitment to **track and catalogue conservation on private lands**.

DUC remains focused on putting the National Conservation Plan into action and accessing funds to deliver programs that benefit waterfowl, other wildlife and all Canadians.



DUC President Mac Dunfield, CEO Greg Siekaniec and Atlantic staff with Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program

The secret spots and favourite haunts frequented by fishers are under increasing threat. Pollution, invasive species, habitat loss and degradation have left fisheries compromised and needing improvement in many areas. The Government of Canada responded to recommendations made by conservation organizations like DUC by extending funding for the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program (RFCPP). An additional \$10 million per year for the next three fiscal years will be available starting in 2016-2017.

To date, DUC has accessed RFCPP funding for 16 habitat restoration projects across Canada. In addition to being nurseries for fish and birds, these wetlands also reduce the effects of flooding and drought, naturally filter drinking water, protect shorelines from rising tides and storm surges and are among the planet's most important tools to combat climate change.



JOURNEY TO:

British
Columbia

12,231
Supporters

811
Volunteers

965
Landowner
partners

596
Habitat projects

591 acres
(238 hectares)
Secured in FY2015

442,841 acres
(179,211 hectares)
Secured since 1938

8.0 million acres
(3.2 million hectares)
Influenced since 1938

Diversity at its best

DESTINATION: *Central Interior Region*

Whether you approach it with the Rockies at your back or with Vancouver's vista in your rear view, the magnificent landscapes of the central Interior are not to be outdone.

The vast area includes the best of British Columbia's wetlands. Dip your paddle, fishing line or un-socked feet into gleaming rivers, streams and wetlands. These are the sources of the province's fresh water. Habitat here is diverse and productive, ranging from parklands to rolling grasslands and the semi-desert of the Okanagan.

From calm areas perfect for canoeing and birdwatching to some of the province's finest fresh-water fishing spots, the central Interior boasts unique outdoor opportunities sure to inspire you. DUC is working to ensure the environmental diversity that exists here remains at its best.



SPOTLIGHT

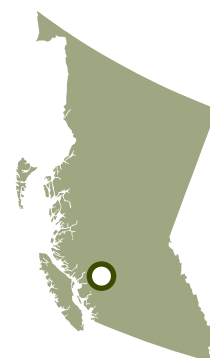
Fletcher Lake

Fletcher Lake lies within the gently rolling hills of the Fraser Plateau and is important to both fish and fowl. DUC completed a major rebuild of the weir to help control water levels in the lake and constructed a fish-way to enhance spawning habitat.

- 509 acres (206 hectares) restored.
- Popular lake for anglers to fish for native rainbow trout.
- Area serves as an important migration staging point for waterfowl moving through B.C.

- Other wildlife using the area include shorebirds and passerines, raptors, rails, grebes, furbearers, mule deer and moose.

- Conservation efforts supported by funding from the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program.



Conserving and protecting British Columbia's natural beauty and ecological assets is challenging work. Here are a few highlights of our efforts that are uprooting threats and planting seeds of conservation in the next generation.

Striking back at Spartina

A sea of small pink flags colour the mudflats along the Fraser River Delta and east coast of Vancouver Island. They're marking clumps of tall grey-green grass. It's Spartina – an invasive plant species that's spreading fast, choking out native plants like eelgrass that wintering waterfowl rely on for food. It's also disrupting the sensitive salt-water ecosystems by transforming the gently sloping mudflats into elevated platforms of solid Spartina stands. As habitat is overgrown, biodiversity suffers.

Removing Spartina is backbreaking work, and drifting seeds spread and take hold easily. But with the help of hearty work crews armed with spades, DUC is striking back. We're part of a working group that's leading efforts to remove Spartina, develop public awareness campaigns and map and track infestations across the province.

Learn more at spartina.ca



Bringing education to life

It's not a mid-lecture daydream. Students from Saint Andrew Regional High School in Victoria, B.C. are being transported from their desks to a wild oasis. The colourful marshland and rocky, forested highlands of the Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary is their classroom.

With financial support from Talisman Energy Inc., the school's been recognized as a DUC Wetland Centre of Excellence where students undertake conservation activities at a nearby wetland. Students are

sharing what they're learning by delivering wetland field trips to their younger counterparts. It's an innovative approach to hands-on learning that's teaching kids about wildlife and the environment by immersing them in it.



JOURNEY TO:

Alberta

23,350
Supporters

1,058
Volunteers

4,243
Landowner
partners

1,961
Habitat projects

5,908 acres
(2,390 hectares)
Secured in FY2015

2.3 million acres
(936,561 hectares)
Secured since 1938

7.3 million acres
(3.0 million hectares)
Influenced since 1938

A pintail's paradise

DESTINATION: *Sullivan Landscape*

Watch as a northern pintail pair swims in waters near Sullivan Lake. Their slim profiles glide gracefully. Their long pointed tails point toward the sky as they dabble or "tip up" to feed on pond weeds and aquatic invertebrates. You'll quickly realize why they're a favourite species among so many bird lovers. The Sullivan landscape is one of the best locations in the world to see them.

Visit in spring to see thousands of pintails converging in this special place to breed, nest and raise their young. The area falls between boreal forest and prairie – a place where rocky ridges and wetlands blend together in a natural harmony. But it's also a place at high risk of habitat loss due to agriculture, petroleum development, road construction and rural subdivisions. DUC is working to ensure the Sullivan landscape remains a paradise for Alberta's signature duck species.



SPOTLIGHT

Red Deer Breaks

DUC used this project as an opportunity to restore both wetland and upland habitat to the Sullivan landscape.

- 24 wetland basins restored and protected on 22 acres (9 hectares).
- 206 acres (83 hectares) converted and protected with perennial cover.

- Project also resulted in protecting and enhancing an additional eight wetland basins on 22 acres (9 hectares) and 98 acres (40 hectares) of native pasture.
- Project is part of DUC's Revolving Land Conservation Program.



In Alberta, conserving habitat that benefits waterfowl, other wildlife and communities across the province requires strong partnerships and a vision for the future. Our work with the provincial government and the success of our education programs are two highlights from the past year that are moving us closer to our conservation goals.

A gem of an award

An emerald is beautiful, precious and green. So is the environment.

DUC's Project Webfoot education program was honoured with an Alberta Emerald Award, which celebrates environmental leadership in the province. Project Webfoot teaches Grades 4 to 6 students about wetlands through safe, interactive and inspiring educational content both inside and outside the classroom. It gives students the chance to get their hands dirty while learning about the importance of conservation in their lives. Special thanks to our partner Inside Education for nominating us for the award.

DUC's Craig Bishop (left), accepts the Public Outreach and Education Emerald Award from Stephanie Sterling, general manager of venture support integration & social performance, Shell Canada



Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program

Flooding and drought are devastating realities for people living in the Prairies. Albertans know all too well the impacts these events can have on communities, livelihoods and the environment. The Government of Alberta has created a new Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program to combat the impacts of these extreme weather events – and DUC is poised to lend a helping hand.

The program provides grants to municipalities and organizations for projects that enhance watersheds' resiliency to the impacts of flooding and drought. DUC submitted a proposal requesting \$11.6 million for a three-year period to conserve and restore wetlands on 1,380 acres (558 hectares) in flood and drought-prone areas of south central and southern Alberta.

UPDATE: In May 2015 our proposal was accepted. Projects will hit the ground in September.



JOURNEY TO:

Saskatchewan

17,062
Supporters

629
Volunteers

4,533
Landowner
partners

2,945
Habitat projects

28,096 acres
(11,369 hectares)
Secured in FY2015

1.8 million acres
(746,698 hectares)
Secured since 1938

5.4 million acres
(2.2 million hectares)
Influenced since 1938

Where history, heritage and habitat meet

DESTINATION: Ponass Lake Heritage Marsh



Just north of Wadena off Highway #35 is an ecotourism destination like no other. Travellers looking to experience Saskatchewan's outdoor wilderness will be blown away by the awesome spectacle of waterfowl darkening the sky.

At the Ponass Lake Heritage Marsh, located within the Quill Lakes watershed, tens of thousands of ducks and thousands of geese gather each year for their migration journey. While on the trails at the marsh, you may also catch a glimpse of the endangered piping plover or

be serenaded by the loud trumpeting calls of resident sandhill cranes. For birders, it doesn't get better than this.

The marsh is a nationally significant area for migratory birds. It's also one of DUC's most historic projects, with conservation work dating back to the 1950s. Visitors are invited to tour the large interpretive centre located in Wynyard. Here you'll find interactive displays, wildlife dioramas, an activity centre and theatre highlighting the area's birds, wetlands and cultural history.



SPOTLIGHT

Ponass Lake Rebuild

Ponass Lake Marsh was designated "Saskatchewan's First Heritage Marsh" in 1981. DUC has been overseeing maintenance on the marsh for decades, but it was time for some major repairs to this important historic site.

- The marsh covers nearly 7,000 acres (2,833 hectares).
- DUC replaced and installed six water control structures and associated safety features.
- Eight farm crossings (areas to accommodate safe transportation of vehicles and equipment) were fitted with new pipes; three additional crossings were replaced and installed with new pipes.
- Generous funding for the rebuild was provided by Wildlife Habitat Canada and Environment Canada.



Environment
Canada

Environnement
Canada



Habitat conservation in Saskatchewan requires effective policies as well as programs that acknowledge the needs of the working landscape. Here are few highlights from the past year.



Revolving lands deliver results

DUC's Revolving Land Conservation Program is a restoration cycle that's making significant habitat gains across the province.

Under the program, land is purchased, its natural function is restored and a conservation agreement is placed on it in perpetuity. The land is then resold, and sale proceeds are reinvested into protecting more important habitat.

As a result, more than 1,290 acres (522 hectares) have been protected with new conservation easements placed on lands sold.

The Revolving Land Conservation Program is a cycle of conservation that returns natural functions to the landscape and demonstrates how the benefits of wetland conservation can create a lasting legacy.

BP settlement funds flow to Allan/Dana Hills

DUC's conservation leadership is being acknowledged as a recipient of settlement funds from the BP Oil Spill, as part of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. These funds were allocated by the North American Wetlands Conservation Council and made available to DUC thanks to our strong scientific understanding of the landscape and knowledge of migratory birds.

Saskatchewan's Allan/Dana Hills have been identified as a focus area with strong migratory relationships with the birds affected by the spill. DUC is working in the area to restore and retain important wetland habitat that will support species affected by the 2010 disaster.

JOURNEY TO:

Manitoba

13,082
Supporters

681
Volunteers

3,063
Landowner
partners

1,310
Habitat projects

5,797 acres
(2,345 hectares)
Secured in FY2015

647,268 acres
(261,939 hectares)
Secured since 1938

1.8 million acres
(732,477 hectares)
Influenced since 1938

Prairie potholes in their prime

DESTINATION: *Killarney landscape*

The view from atop the rolling hills captures a classic scene of Manitoba's Prairie Pothole Region. Large swaths of agricultural land stretch out toward the horizon line. Here and there shallow wetlands sparkle in the sun, beckoning waterfowl of all kinds to stop, nest and raise their young. The highest densities of breeding ducks in North America occur in the Prairie Pothole Region of Canada. Manitoba's Killarney landscape is no exception.

To the west, the shallow rolling hills differ greatly in look and function from the heavy rolling land of the Tiger Hills – known for the abundance of tiger lillies that grow there. Divided by the Pembina Valley, the shallow wetlands in the west are loved by blue-winged teal and pintails. In the hills, the deeper pockets of semi-permanent and permanent wetlands attract diving duck species. The landscape's main water bodies, including Whitewater Lake, are prime staging areas for many species of waterfowl including swans, geese and ducks.



SPOTLIGHT

Tufts Project

The Tufts Project near Whitewater Lake is the first in the area to be rolled into the Revolving Land Conservation Program. It quickly created a snowball effect of other land in the area entering the program. Highlights of the Tufts Project include:

- 34 wetlands restored on the 320-acre (129.5-hectare) half-section property.

- Land will be kept in agricultural production.
- It is the first DUC project to use the no drain, no fill easement. This better accommodates wetland conservation and sustainable agricultural production by allowing producers to seed the wetlands when dry.



Conserving wetland habitat across Manitoba – including the Killarney landscape – depends on strong public policy and agricultural partnerships. Here are a few highlights from the past year that demonstrate DUC's commitment to working collaboratively with those who share our passion for the environment.

Policy makers send clear message on wetland protection

Manitobans have first-hand experience with watershed disasters. Flooding in southwestern Manitoba and blue-green algae blooms on Lake Winnipeg happen, in part, because of upstream activity. New drainage regulations proposed by the Government of Manitoba will help conserve wetlands and the benefits they provide. When enacted, the new drainage regulations will benefit landowners, communities and producers who suffer the effects of severe weather, such as the Manitoba floods of 2011 and 2014. DUC's research has shown that wetland conservation is an important step toward stopping, and eventually reversing, water-related problems on the Prairies. DUC is working hard to ensure the new regulations are adopted and effective.



Sustainable beef and forage production

DUC received funding for a section of land located north of Brandon, previously known as Manitoba's Zero-Till Farm. The federal and provincial governments are providing \$1.5 million over three years to conduct research on sustainable beef and forage production. The location will act as a demonstration site to share knowledge with producers and other stakeholders about grassland management, animal feed efficiency and herd health.

Representatives from DUC sit on the newly formed advisory committee and are helping determine what research and demonstration practices will be implemented on the farm. The vision for the farm is to create a centre of innovation using made-in-Manitoba solutions for the benefit of forage, beef and mixed-grass prairie habitat. A healthy beef industry maintains grass and water on the landscape, which are vital components of waterfowl habitat.



JOURNEY TO:

Ontario

25,862
Supporters

1,120
Volunteers

2,867
Landowner
partners

1,421
Habitat projects

4,491 acres
(1,817 hectares)
Secured in FY2015

966,487 acres
(391,122 hectares)
Secured since 1938

648,855 acres
(262,592 hectares)
Influenced since 1938

Hidden gems amid vast waters

DESTINATION: *Great Lakes Coastal Wetlands*

North America's Great Lakes are iconic. But exploring the region's coastal wetlands will give you a new perspective on this legendary landscape. These wetlands are hidden gems that link land and water. They're dynamic, productive and diverse ecosystems.

While trolling the shallow waters, you'll immediately appreciate their natural beauty. Sandy beaches and stands of cattails offer a sense of tranquility. Then there's the wildlife. Coastal wetlands are nurseries for fish like largemouth bass, northern pike and muskellunge. They also provide nesting and staging habitat for many species of ducks and shorebirds. But what's most remarkable are the benefits you can't see. Coastal wetlands naturally filter pollutants from the water entering the Lakes. They also protect shorelines from storm damage and erosion.

Coastal wetlands are critical to the health and well-being of all who use the Great Lakes, but are under significant threat. DUC conservation efforts are helping turn the tide.



Conserving coastal wetlands and other important landscapes in Ontario requires the support of passionate people who share our commitment. This year, new leadership roles for volunteers and a partnership born from shared waters are helping take our efforts to new heights.

New volunteer ventures

When it comes to dedication, enthusiasm and hard work, DUC volunteers are tops. For decades they've been hosting dinners, auctions and other events to raise much-needed dollars that make wetland conservation possible. In Ontario, however, volunteers are moving beyond the banquet halls and taking their passion to a whole new level.

By restructuring Ontario's Volunteer Leadership Council to align with other DUC programs, volunteers across the province are rolling up their sleeves and getting to work in new ways. Nest box maintenance, engaging elected officials, media relations and facilitating education events are just some of the activities volunteers will be tackling through this new model. It's leveraging the skills and knowledge of our most steadfast supporters to affect positive change in all aspects of our conservation mission.

Brock Sportsmen's chapter volunteers install a nest box at a local wetland. The chapter was recently honoured with an award for their community outreach efforts.



SPOTLIGHT

Jeannette's Creek

This diked and managed DUC project is a remnant of the extensive historical riverine wetlands that once lined the mouth of the Thames River at Lake St. Clair.

- 64-acre (26-hectare) coastal wetland.
- Phragmites (an invasive perennial grass) was

hindering the growth of native plants and depleting food supplies for wildlife.

- Conservation efforts by The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, the Lower Thames Conservation Authority and DUC will ensure a healthy future for this vibrant area.



Joining forces for wetlands

Fish and waterfowl have more in common than one might think. They're at the heart of some of the country's favourite outdoor traditions – and they share habitat. These linkages have inspired a new agreement between Muskies Canada Sport Fishing and Research Inc. and DUC. With a mutual concern for conserving the

natural areas where species swim, spawn, dive and dabble, the two organizations signed a five-year memorandum of understanding to work together to protect wetlands along the Ottawa River and across eastern Ontario.



JOURNEY TO:

Quebec

3,979
Supporters

243
Volunteers

314
Landowner
partners

250
Habitat projects

2,761 acres
(1,117 hectares)
Secured in FY2015

71,638 acres
(28,990 hectares)
Secured since 1938

37.8 million acres
(15.3 million hectares)
Influenced since 1938

History and habitat mingle in nature-lover's paradise

DESTINATION: *Saint-Bernard Island*

Located in the city of Châteauguay, just 20 minutes from Montreal, the island played an important role in North America's colonial history. The island's wildlife sanctuary (see spotlight) is named for Marguerite D'Youville, founder of the Grey Nuns of Montreal.

If enjoying the early Canadian history here isn't thrilling enough, the island's wildlife and rare natural habitats will take your breath away.

The island lures all sorts of visitors with its perfect mix of wetland complexes and lush inland greenery. An extensive trail network leads you through a nature-lover's paradise, where wetlands, streams, ponds, grassy areas, and stands of white oak and sugar maple harbour a documented 225 species of birds and several rare plants.

DUC's work here is making conservation history: protecting and keeping the island's critical habitats healthy for people and wildlife to enjoy now and for generations to come.



SPOTLIGHT

Marguerite-D'Youville Wildlife Refuge

This peaceful oasis covers 90 per cent of Saint-Bernard Island and the largest intact area of the Lake St-Louis floodplain. Its rich and productive complex of wetlands, shorelines and grasslands makes the refuge an important stopover for migratory birds.

- Extreme fluctuations in water levels made the area inhospitable for wildlife.
- DUC's improvements on 257 acres (104 hectares) of wetlands helped stabilize the water levels; it's now ideal habitat for abundant wildlife, waterfowl and fish.
- DUC and the Quebec Ministry of Natural Resources and Wildlife acquired the lands in 2010 to secure these important ecosystems for the future.



Like everything in La Belle Province, DUC's conservation work in Quebec is steeped in history. Highlights from the past year include restoration efforts along the famous Ottawa River and mapping efforts that are taking conservation technology into the future.

Massettes Marsh makeover

DUC restored Massettes Marsh – located on the Ottawa River's north shore near Gatineau, Que. – in 1978. For the next 30 years, the marsh's prime habitat attracted waterfowl species like black duck, mallard, blue-winged teal, northern pintail and Canada goose, and a variety of other wildlife.

More recently, Massettes Marsh's aging infrastructure affected its ability to host wildlife. The marsh's water control structure was clogged with debris. The dike was degraded in places, potentially allowing water to drain onto surrounding lands.

In February 2015 DUC repaired the dike and built a new concrete dam at the marsh outlet to create 180 acres (73 hectares) of enhanced wetland. With its makeover now complete, the beautiful Massettes Marsh is set to welcome wildlife and people once again.



Mapping the future of Quebec's wetlands

DUC completed wetland mapping of the Portneuf and Mauricie regions of southern Quebec in December 2014.

Decision makers from many sectors will use DUC's mapping tools – which contain baseline information about the extent, type and state of wetlands – to ensure that wetlands are considered as part of their land-use planning and conservation activities.

In 2009, DUC, together with the Quebec Ministry of Sustainable Development, Environment, Wildlife and Parks, launched this ambitious detailed wetland inventory and mapping initiative for southern Quebec. So far, DUC has completed inventories and maps for 80 per cent of this densely populated region.

JOURNEY TO:

New Brunswick

7,852
Supporters

269
Volunteers

607
Landowner
partners

431
Habitat projects

76 acres
(30 hectares)
Secured in FY2015

53,040 acres
(21,464 hectares)
Secured since 1938

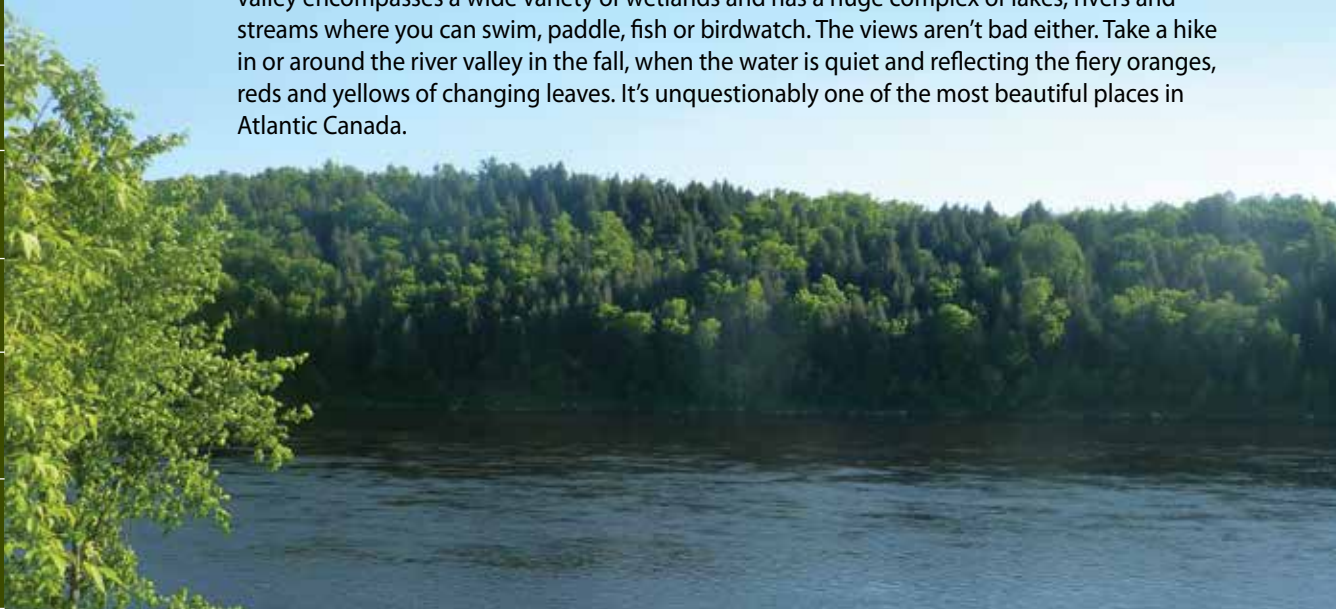
940,255 acres
(380,521 hectares)
Influenced since 1938

Vivid river views, vital habitats

DESTINATION: *St. John River Valley*

The St. John River, known as Wolostog or “bountiful beautiful river” by the Maliseet First Nations people, widens gradually as it winds through New Brunswick from Maine, eventually emptying into the Bay of Fundy at Saint John.

The river is vital habitat for wildlife and species at risk such as striped bass, Atlantic salmon and Nelson’s sharptail sparrows. It’s also an important staging site for migrating waterfowl. The river valley encompasses a wide variety of wetlands and has a huge complex of lakes, rivers and streams where you can swim, paddle, fish or birdwatch. The views aren’t bad either. Take a hike in or around the river valley in the fall, when the water is quiet and reflecting the fiery oranges, reds and yellows of changing leaves. It’s unquestionably one of the most beautiful places in Atlantic Canada.



In addition to conserving the province’s iconic natural areas, DUC is working in New Brunswick to deliver solutions that combat extreme weather events and introduce the next generation to the wonder of wetlands.



SPOTLIGHT

Gateway Marsh

Restored by DUC in early 2015, Gateway Marsh is a sanctuary for wildlife.

- 17 acres (7 hectares).
- A near-urban wetland located within the town of Oromocto.

- Visitors can spot a variety of animals, from beavers to red-winged blackbirds and deer.
- Plans are underway to build a walking trail and boardwalk around the marsh, complete with signs, rest areas and an interpretive centre to help teach the public how wild places and urban areas can co-exist.



Salem Elementary School wetland

DUC and several community partners came together to restore a wetland and build a new outdoor classroom, complete with wooden pirate ship, on an abandoned field at Salem Elementary School in Sackville. Having a wetland right in the school’s backyard will allow teachers to expand DUC’s Project Webfoot education program and other nature-based education activities within the school. This will help get kids outside and teach them the value of wetlands to the environment.

Moncton snow-dump wetland

Last winter, as a solution to New Brunswick’s record-breaking snowfall, DUC and the City of Moncton constructed a wetland near the area where snow from streets is dumped and piled. By spring 2016, melted runoff from this snow dump will flow into a nearby creek cleaner than ever. The shallow marsh will clean the snow melt running through it by capturing sediment, filtering particulates and absorbing excess nutrients and contaminants.



JOURNEY TO:

Nova
Scotia

3,790
Supporters

194
Volunteers

707
Landowner
partners

400
Habitat projects

166 acres
(67 hectares)
Secured in FY2015

45,852 acres
(18,555 hectares)
Secured since 1938

960,047 acres
(388,531 hectares)
Influenced since 1938

Atlantic Canada's must-see attraction

DESTINATION: *Annapolis Valley*

There's a reason Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley is one of the most visited places in the province. The region boasts vineyards and wineries, apple orchards and strawberry fields, an abundance of roadside farm stands and breathtaking views of waterways – from the immense Bay of Fundy to the more tranquil Annapolis River and surrounding marshes.

Whether you're cycling, hiking, paddling or driving, you'll spot many species of waterfowl and wildlife, especially in the fall when the low-lying marshland is full of migrating birds.



SPOTLIGHT

Belleisle Marsh

This piece of waterfowl paradise is co-managed with the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources. It incorporates wildlife habitat, recreation and sustainable agriculture practices to accommodate waterfowl nesting.

- 645 acres (261 hectares).
- Located along the Annapolis River, which runs the length of the Valley.

- Perfect place to paddle or take a walk to do some wildlife watching. Be on the lookout for black ducks, mallards and even bald eagles.
- During FY15, DUC made major repairs to four sections of the dike wall, ensuring the wetland remains vital habitat for waterfowl.



On top of contributing to the natural beauty of some famous tourist destinations, DUC in Nova Scotia is helping raise a new generation of conservation leaders, while also restoring important pieces of habitat to their former glory. Here are a few highlights from the past year.

Somerset and District Elementary Wetland Centre of Excellence

DUC established its first elementary school Wetland Centre of Excellence (WCE) at Somerset and District Elementary School. Thanks to funding from the Cornwallis Headwaters Society, students are learning about wetlands and the environment in their school's wetland room, and getting their hands dirty and their boots muddy on field trips to nearby Miner's Marsh. The Somerset WCE is one of three new WCEs in Atlantic Canada, including Fredericton High School and Simonds High School in Saint John, N.B.



Oliver Marsh restoration

DUC restored a 16-acre (6.5-hectare) wetland near Tatamagouche. Work included enhancing a drained wetland by restoring the wetland's natural hydrology. This will help bring more biodiversity to the area once water is set on the project. Oliver Marsh will not only provide nesting habitat for ducks and refuge for migrating waterfowl that feed on nearby salt marshes, but will also help mitigate flooding in the area.



JOURNEY TO:

Prince
Edward Island

1,353

Supporters

59

Volunteers

584

Landowner
partners

366

Habitat projects

130 acres

(52 hectares)

Secured in FY2015

13,814 acres

(5,590 hectares)

Secured since 1938

81,306 acres

(32,905 hectares)

Influenced since 1938

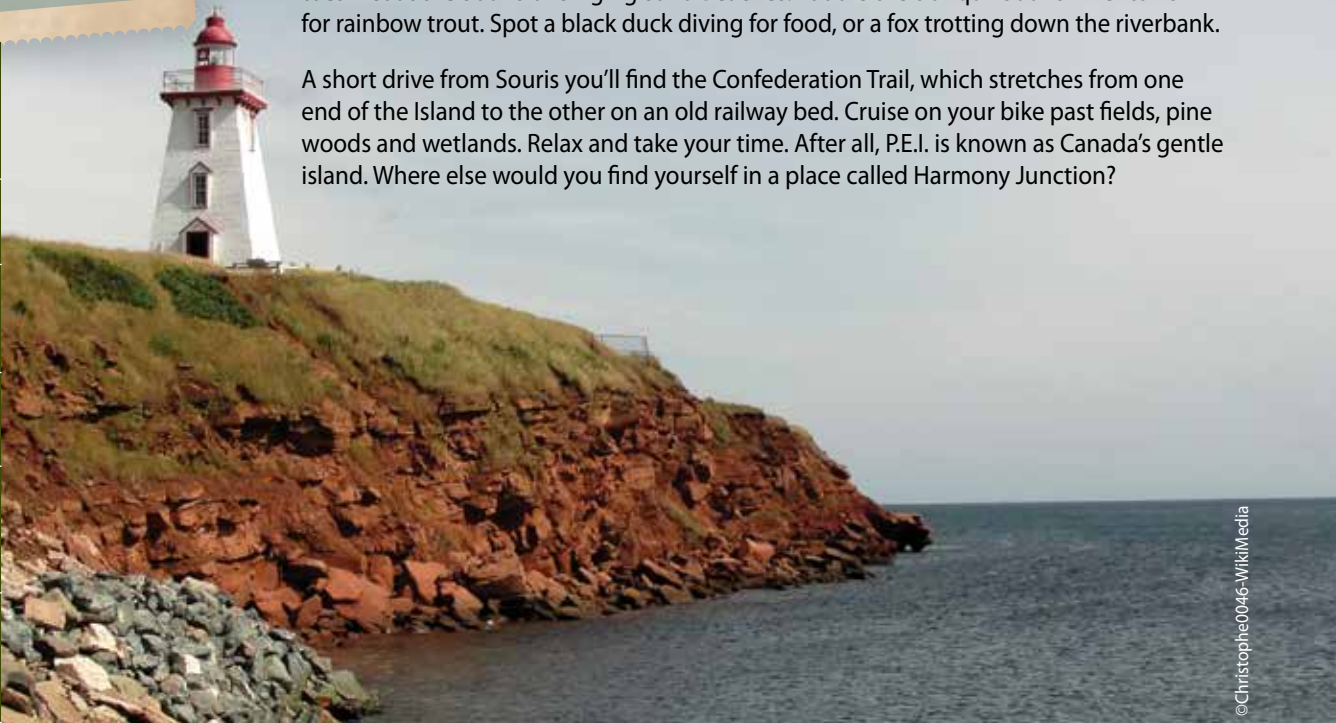
Take your (island) time

DESTINATION:

Kings County

No matter how many times you visit, Prince Edward Island's red-faced cliffs, sandy shores and gentle rolling hills never get old. Travel to the eastern part of the Island and get your toes wet at the Souris or Singing Sand Beaches. Paddle the tranquil Souris River to fish for rainbow trout. Spot a black duck diving for food, or a fox trotting down the riverbank.

A short drive from Souris you'll find the Confederation Trail, which stretches from one end of the Island to the other on an old railway bed. Cruise on your bike past fields, pine woods and wetlands. Relax and take your time. After all, P.E.I. is known as Canada's gentle island. Where else would you find yourself in a place called Harmony Junction?



©Christophe0046-WikiMedia

Don't let its size fool you. Prince Edward Island is delivering big conservation wins. Here are a few key projects from the past year that are benefiting wildlife and communities all across the province.

Wolfe Inlet salt marsh

It's one of the largest remaining intact salt marshes on the island. Wolfe Inlet is host to a diverse variety of wildlife and plants such as black ducks, shore birds, gulls, raptors and eel grass – just to name a few. This is an important and biodiverse piece of coastal habitat. DUC purchased a 73-acre (30-hectare) marshland and upland swath of Wolfe Inlet, which will conserve this area for years to come.



2nd MacLeod's Marsh

Three fish ladders were rebuilt with funding from the federal Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program. This included a nature-like fishway at 2nd MacLeod's Marsh near Murray River. Showcasing the latest in fishway design, the nature-like fish ladder was built with rocks—some of which were hand-placed to create resting pools for fish—to mimic the slope and structure of a stream.

Roy MacMillan stands next to the naturalized fishway at his wetland north of Murray River, P.E.I.



SPOTLIGHT

Harmony Junction

DUC is working in the area to provide important habitat for both fish and fowl – and amazing outdoor experiences for all.

- 10 acres (4 hectares).
- Nestled along the Confederation Trail.

- The trail passes within feet of the forested wetland and its new hybrid fishway, completed as part of Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program.
- Important habitat for brook and rainbow trout. From the gravel path, you can watch them swim their way up the fish ladder.



JOURNEY TO:

Newfoundland
and Labrador

2,007
Supporters

197
Volunteers

26
Landowner
partners

44
Habitat projects

43 acres
(17 hectares)
Secured in FY2015

9,271 acres
(3,751 hectares)
Secured since 1938

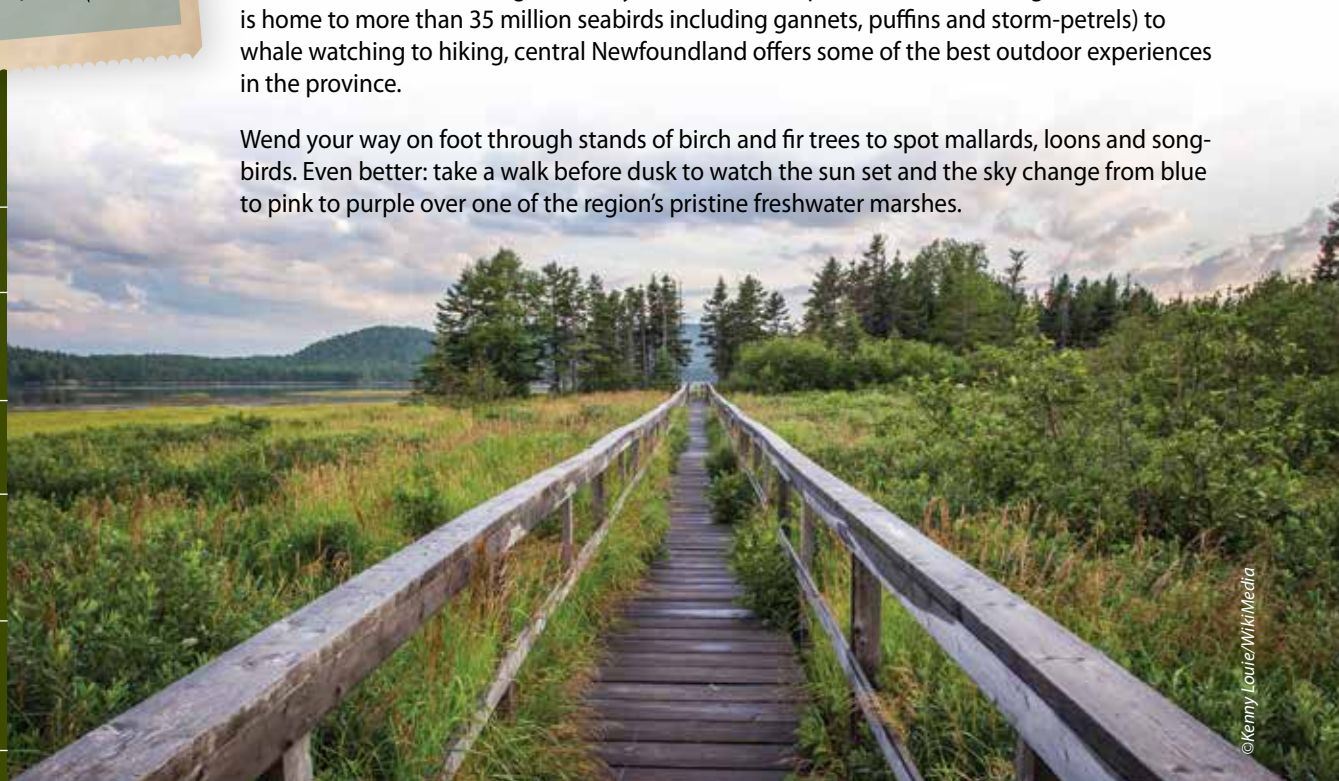
14.3 million acres
(5.8 million hectares)
Influenced since 1938

A seabird oasis

DESTINATION: *Central Newfoundland*

Famous for its postcard views of passing icebergs, rugged coastline and dense boreal forest, Newfoundland's central region is truly the heart of the province. From birding (Newfoundland is home to more than 35 million seabirds including gannets, puffins and storm-petrels) to whale watching to hiking, central Newfoundland offers some of the best outdoor experiences in the province.

Wend your way on foot through stands of birch and fir trees to spot mallards, loons and song-birds. Even better: take a walk before dusk to watch the sun set and the sky change from blue to pink to purple over one of the region's pristine freshwater marshes.



©Kenny Louie/WikiMedia



SPOTLIGHT

Corduroy Brook Marsh

Thanks to the help of members of the Corduroy Brook Enhancement Association, DUC repaired the marsh's five-step fish ladder using local spruce stop-logs. Stop by the structure to see if you can spy any trout.

- 116 acres (47 hectares).
- Located in Grand Falls-Windsor.
- Includes an extensive and well-maintained trail system.



DUC's priority in Newfoundland and Labrador is to work with the provincial government and other conservation partners to promote sustainable development and the need to protect the province's natural areas and habitat. Here are a few highlights from the past year that are bringing us closer to our conservation goals.



Wetland mapping

Knowing the location and type of wetlands across the region is an important part of conservation. That's why DUC teamed up with Dr. Bahram Salehi and his crew at LOOKNorth to create a state-of-the-art GIS wetland map. The new map will help DUC not only locate wetlands, but determine the type of wetlands they find across the province. It will also help advance a provincial wetland conservation policy.

Other partners in the project include the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Research and Development Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador, Environment Canada and the Canadian Centre for Mapping and Earth Observation.



Eider nest shelter

Groups of dedicated volunteers from across Newfoundland and Labrador deployed 137 eider nest shelters on 10 coastal islands. Volunteers also inspected 722 shelters already in place across the province. This work is critical in Newfoundland and Labrador as nesting shelters provide common eiders with protection from predators where natural cover, like tall grass or shrubs, is scarce. Conservation groups like DUC have been using the shelters to reverse eider decline in the province over the past 20 years.

DUC volunteers, Eddie and Bessie Pilgrim, prepare to install nest shelters. There can be up to six female eiders with nests in one shelter at the same time.

JOURNEY TO:

the Boreal Forest

8.3 million acres
(3.4 million hectares)
Influenced in FY2015

112.3 million acres
(45.4 million hectares)
Influenced since 1938

**Stats include acres from all provinces and territories within the boreal region.*



A landscape defined by water

DESTINATION: *Hudson Bay Lowlands*

Walk along lower Hudson Bay and you sink a little with each step. A green sponge wraps all the way from the Seal River estuary near Manitoba's northern border to the mouth of the Opinaca River on Quebec's side of James Bay. It forms the world's largest peatlands complex – the Hudson Bay Lowlands – a landscape defined by water.

Kayak down one of the numerous rivers that pour into the Bay. At some point, you'll emerge from the familiar black spruce forest into a setting like no other. Bogs and fens are dotted with marshes along the shore. When you reach the river estuary, put down the paddle. Marvel at the feeling of being engulfed in birds, their deafening calls contrasting the tranquility of before.

Across this majestic landscape, these wetlands are working for you. Try (and fail) to fathom the sheer volume of water they filter or the immense amount of carbon they seal below. All this ecosystem does for wildlife and people makes it one of DUC's top priorities in the boreal.



SPOTLIGHT

Seal River Bird Surveys

Manitoba's northernmost river is the largest that remains undammed. It is also recognized as an *Important Bird Area*.

- DUC is working with Oceans North Canada, Bird Studies Canada and the Manitoba government to support the protection of the Seal River Estuary and the nearby Knife River delta.
- In 2013 and 2014, we flew more than 4,800 kilometers of aerial surveys to document waterfowl abundance in the region.
- Our results contribute to the growing understanding of this area's ecological importance, and thus the case for its protection from industrial development.

Successful wetland conservation in the boreal region is closely tied to sustainable forestry practices. Here are a few highlights of our work with governments and members of the forestry industry that are helping ensure the health and longevity of water and wildlife in this largely pristine part of the world.

New forestry standards

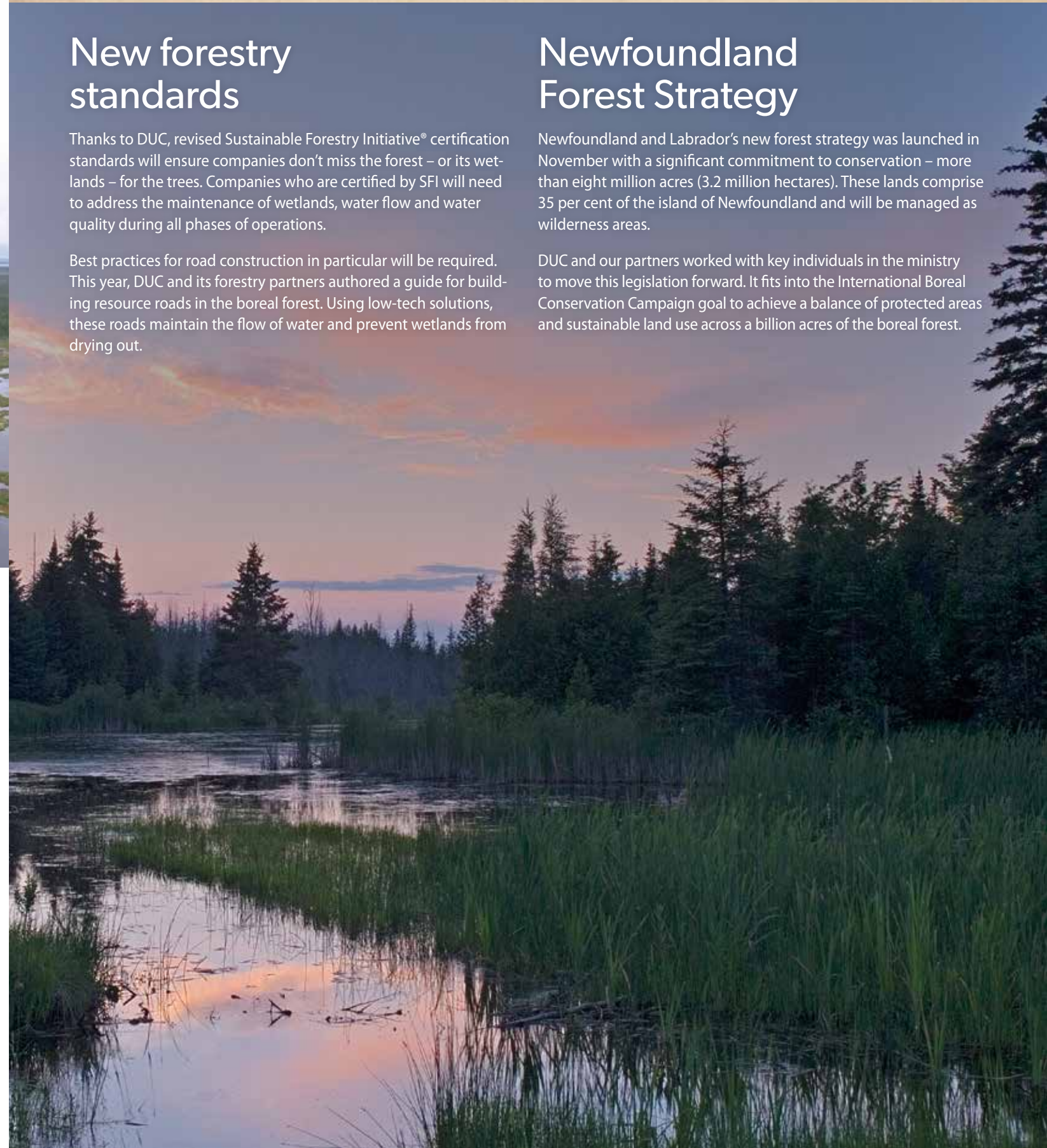
Thanks to DUC, revised Sustainable Forestry Initiative® certification standards will ensure companies don't miss the forest – or its wetlands – for the trees. Companies who are certified by SFI will need to address the maintenance of wetlands, water flow and water quality during all phases of operations.

Best practices for road construction in particular will be required. This year, DUC and its forestry partners authored a guide for building resource roads in the boreal forest. Using low-tech solutions, these roads maintain the flow of water and prevent wetlands from drying out.

Newfoundland Forest Strategy

Newfoundland and Labrador's new forest strategy was launched in November with a significant commitment to conservation – more than eight million acres (3.2 million hectares). These lands comprise 35 per cent of the island of Newfoundland and will be managed as wilderness areas.

DUC and our partners worked with key individuals in the ministry to move this legislation forward. It fits into the International Boreal Conservation Campaign goal to achieve a balance of protected areas and sustainable land use across a billion acres of the boreal forest.



DUC volunteers, donors and other proud supporters are raising funds and their voices in support of wetlands and the environment.



2015 National Art Portfolio Artist of the Year
Mike Smith – Quiet Anticipation

Connecting art and conservation

Wildlife artists have an incredible talent. Not only do their brush strokes capture the beauty that exists in nature, they remind us of the need to conserve it.

DUC's National Art Portfolio supports this connection between art and conservation. Every year, artists from coast to coast pick up their paintbrushes in the name of conservation and submit their work to DUC. Selected artists have their work made into limited-edition prints and are given national exposure through DUC fundraising initiatives. Some of the world's foremost nature artists submit to the National Art Portfolio, including DUC's 2015 artist of the year, Mike Smith.



Honkytonk delivers habitat and a helping hand to Saskatchewan communities

Country music and conservation have a lot in common. They connect people to their favourite outdoor places, whether it's a secret fishing hole or a wide open field. Both require communities of people with shared values to make them truly come alive.

Recognizing this, DUC developed the Saskatchewan Community Concert Series as a new and innovative approach to our fundraising activities. The goal was to host entertaining evenings of live country music to raise funds for wetland conservation as well as other community projects in light of flooding and late-season seeding and harvests that took a toll on residents this year.

Artists like Doc Walker and Codie Prevost hit the stage to show their support and to help lift spirits. Five towns took part, each with their own project (e.g. rinks or heritage halls) where a portion of the funds would be directed. The Community Concert Series is a partnership approach that acknowledges the strong relationship between DUC and the communities where we work.



Volunteer of the Year

Volunteers are constant reminders of the power and importance of our work. This year, DUC teamed up with the Suzuki Canada Dealer Foundation to recognize and celebrate the exceptional work of volunteers across the country with a new Volunteer Champions Awards Program.

More than 90 volunteers and chapters were honoured. Of these, Alberta's Alana Gibson was chosen by DUC staff, supporters and her fellow volunteers as DUC's first-ever Volunteer of the Year.

We're never surprised, but always impressed by the time and commitment volunteers share. These awards are another way to say thank you.

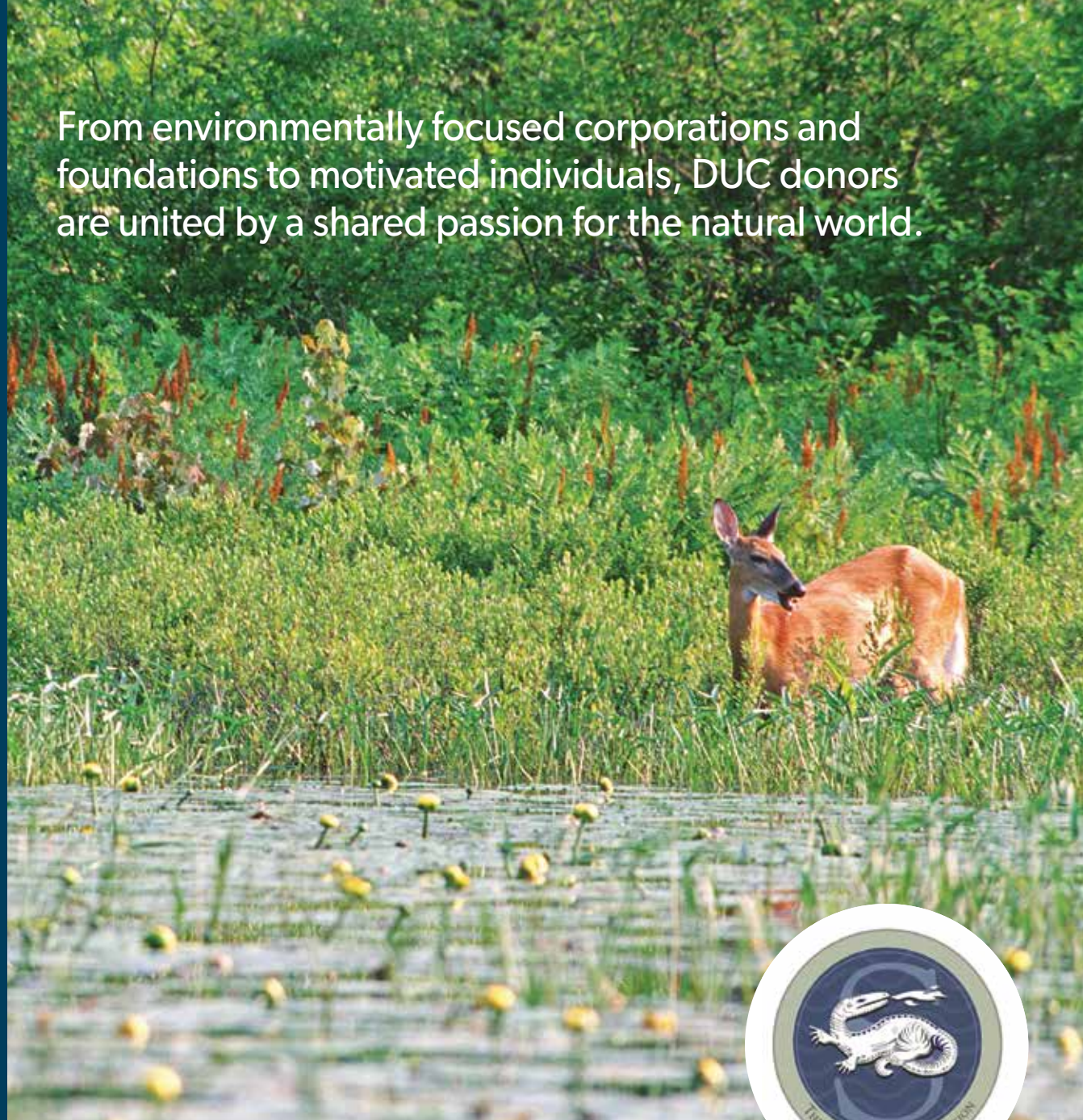


Suzuki Canada Dealer Foundation, proud sponsor of Ducks Unlimited Canada's volunteers



Alana Gibson, 2015 DUC Volunteer of the Year

From environmentally focused corporations and foundations to motivated individuals, DUC donors are united by a shared passion for the natural world.



Salamander Foundation helps clean up Lake Simcoe

Lake Simcoe and Georgian Bay near Barrie, Ont. are carrying a heavy burden. Algae. It's washing up on shores, deteriorating water quality and impacting wildlife and surrounding communities.

Thanks to a \$50,000 pledge from the Salamander Foundation, the Lake Simcoe Georgian Bay Wetland Collaborative (LSGBWC) is moving closer to developing a solution through wetland conservation. Wetlands

naturally reduce phosphorus and other nutrients that are carried into these waters. Support from the Salamander Foundation will further the LSGBWC's work in landowner outreach, municipal engagement and research to help conserve, manage and restore Ontario wetlands that can help clean up Lake Simcoe and southeastern Georgian Bay.

A challenging match

The power of collective giving got a whole lot greater thanks to a match challenge issued by Great-West Life.

The leading Canadian insurer has pledged to support DUC's youth environmental education and wetland conservation efforts in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Quebec through a fundraising match program in conjunction with select fundraising dinners. Great-West Life has chosen to match funds raised at each event, with up to \$25,000 directly supporting wetland education.

Great-West Life representatives are attending each event and will join us in promoting efforts to inspire and educate the next generation of conservation leaders and support wetland conservation. The first dinner held in Winnipeg on February 25, 2015 was a huge success seeing more than \$50,000 raised, with another \$25,000 then matched by Great-West Life.



THE
Great-West Life
ASSURANCE  COMPANY

STRONGER COMMUNITIES TOGETHER™

Bayer CropScience supports sustainable agriculture

The future of agriculture depends in part on crop diversity and sustainability. Winter cereals are uniquely positioned as a solution to many of the sustainability issues the industry faces. DUC's winter wheat program helps producers add winter wheat to their cropping rotations. This has proven to increase productivity and economic return for producers while creating essential habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife in the Prairie Pothole Region of North America. After completing its founding sponsorship of \$22 million continentally for the winter wheat program, Bayer CropScience has now

recommitted to supporting phase two of the program for three years with \$1.2 million of funding directly to DUC. With this gift, the winter wheat program will continue to be an effective solution for producers and waterfowl alike.



Bayer CropScience



Responsibility for guiding and directing DUC operations lies with the dedicated members of the board of directors. Directors hail from all across Canada and the United States. They are elected by the DUC voting members and are chosen to reflect a broad range of expertise through the DUC nominating committee.

Board of Directors & Past Presidents

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Chairman of the Board

Mac Dunfield
President

James E. Couch
Vice-President

David C. Blom
Vice-President

John Eagle
Treasurer

Gregory Weeks
Secretary

Gregory E. Siekaniec
Chief Executive Officer

British Columbia

Robert G. Clark
Julius DeBaar
Donald H.E. Hubbard ✱
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Greg Sawchuck

Alberta

Mel F. Belich, Q.C.
David C. Blom
Jack H. Hole
David McCoy
Travis G. Peckham ✱
Kevin Rome

Saskatchewan

James E. Couch
John Eagle
Bryan Leverick
James McHattie, FRCPC, AGAF ✱

Manitoba

Robert Kozminski
James A. “Jim” Richardson ✱
Gregory E. Siekaniec

Ontario

Gary Down
Jackie Down
Thomas Pick
W. Gerald Walker
Gregory Weeks ✱
Tom Worden

Quebec

Roger d’Eschambault
James Madon ✱
Pierre Renaud

Nova Scotia

Grenville Jones ✱
Raymond G. Scoggins, Jr.

New Brunswick

Mac Dunfield
Shawn Graham ✱
Kevin Harris

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Hazard K. Campbell
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Grady Hartzog, Jr.
Rogers Hoyt, Jr.
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Ron Rich
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Mike Woodward

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C. Neil Downey
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George C. Reifel
Duncan W. Sinclair
William G. “Bill” Turnbull
Claude H. Wilson
G. Tod Wright

Emeriti

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Gilles Rivard, Q.C.
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Terry Sparks
Fred Wagman
Julius F. Wall
John D. Woodward

Executive Vice-President Emeritus

D. Stewart Morrison

Chairman of the Board Emeritus

Hazard K. Campbell

Role of the Board

- Approve the values, mission and vision, as well as the broad long-term objectives, ethical considerations and governing policies of DUC.
- Hire, establish objectives and monitor the performance of the CEO and provide for succession planning.
- Provide support to staff, where appropriate, to achieve the objectives of DUC – particularly in fundraising and policy.
- Approve the budget and the risk management approach of DUC.
- Monitor the performance of DUC, as well as its management, committees and task forces in achieving our vision, mission and broad long-term objectives.
- Recruit, orient, develop and motivate directors, officers and senior provincial directors who are willing and capable of helping DUC achieve its objectives.
- Facilitate the operations of the Board through appropriate governance processes.
- Monitor management’s compliance with legislative and fiduciary requirements.

Board Committees

- Executive Committee
- Conservation Programs Committee
- Membership & Revenue Committee
- Development Committee
- Finance & Risk Committee
- Governance Committee
- Personnel Policy Committee
- Nominating Committee
- Audit Committee

Past Presidents

Honorable Mr. Justice William G. Ross †
Regina, SK – 1938-39

O. Leigh Spencer †
Calgary, AB – 1940-42

William C. Fisher, K.C. †
Calgary, AB – 1943-44

S.S. Holden †
Ottawa, ON – 1945-46

Honorable Mr. Justice William G. Ross †
Regina, SK – 1947

Dr. Walter F. Tisdale †
Winnipeg, MB – 1948-49

Judge L.T. McKim †
Yorkton, SK – 1950-51

Colonel W.F.W. Hancock, O.B.E. †
Edmonton, AB – 1952-53

Gordon E. Konantz †
Winnipeg, MB – 1954

Chief Justice William M. Martin †
Regina, SK – 1955-56

Richard H.G. Bonnycastle †
Winnipeg, MB – 1957-60

Fred S. Auger †
Vancouver, BC – 1961-62

W. Kenneth Martin, D.D.S. †
Regina, SK – 1963-64

Robert A. Kramer †
Regina, SK – 1965

W. Kenneth Martin, D.D.S. †
Regina, SK – 1966

Festus S. Sharpe †
Winnipeg, MB – 1967

W. Kenneth Martin, D.D.S. †
Regina, SK – 1968

Lorne M. Cameron †
Victoria, BC – 1969-70

Robert A. White †
Vancouver, BC – 1971-72

Roderick O.A. Hunter †
Winnipeg, MB – 1973-74

Duncan M. Jessiman
Winnipeg, MB – 1975-76

Hugh H. Mackay †
Rothsay, NB – 1977-78

John D. McDiarmid
Vancouver, BC – 1979

Douglas C. Groff †
Winnipeg, MB – 1980

G. Fitzpatrick Dunn †
Victoria, BC – 1981

Herbert H. Cowburn, D.D.S. †
Saskatoon, SK – 1982-83

Honorable W. John McKeag †
Winnipeg, MB – 1984-85

Arthur L. Irving
Saint John, NB – 1986-87

Duncan W. Sinclair, M.D.
Aylmer, ON – 1988-89

John C. Eaton
Toronto, ON – 1990-91

Claude H. Wilson
Winnipeg, MB – 1992-93

William G. Turnbull
Calgary, AB – 1994-95

George C. Reifel
Vancouver, BC – 1996-98

G. Tod Wright
Burlington, ON – 1999-2000

Mel F. Belich, Q.C.
Calgary, AB – 2001-02

John R. Messer
Tisdale, SK – 2003-04

Peter D. Carton
Regina, SK – 2005-07

C. Neil Downey
Red Deer, AB – 2007-09

Jack H. Hole
Gunn, AB – 2009-11

Tom Worden
Courtice, ON – 2011-13

Organizational Overview

DUC generates revenue from four primary sources:

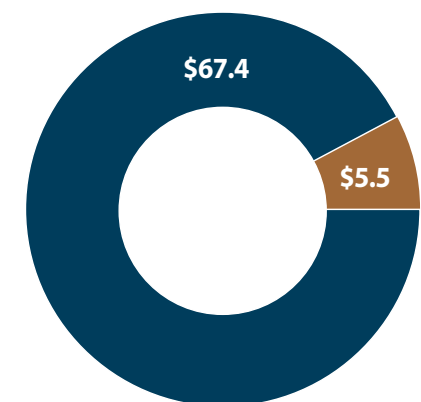
- fundraising income, which includes philanthropic giving and grassroots fundraising as well as donations from other non-government organizations such as DU Inc. in the United States;
- grants from a variety of government sources including federal (both Canada and U.S.), provincial, state and municipal;
- program and other income, which includes mitigation revenue and ancillary revenues from the management of owned conservation lands; and
- investment income from short-and long-term investments.

DUC benefits from:

- diverse revenue sources;
- efficient use of funds;
- leveraging dollars raised; and
- financial strength

Uses of Funds*

(\$ millions)



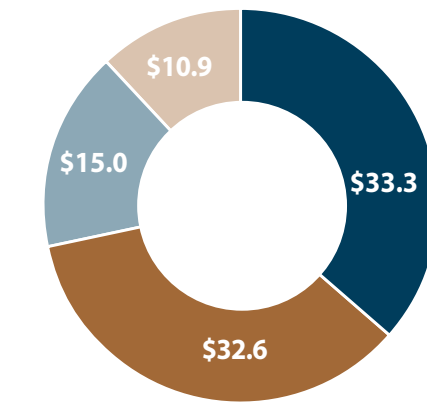
■ Conservation mission
(including capitalized land purchases)

■ Administration

* does not include \$15.6 million in fundraising and philanthropic expenses

Sources of Revenue

(\$ millions)



■ Fundraising income
(including gifts in kind)

■ Government grants

■ Investment income

■ Program & other

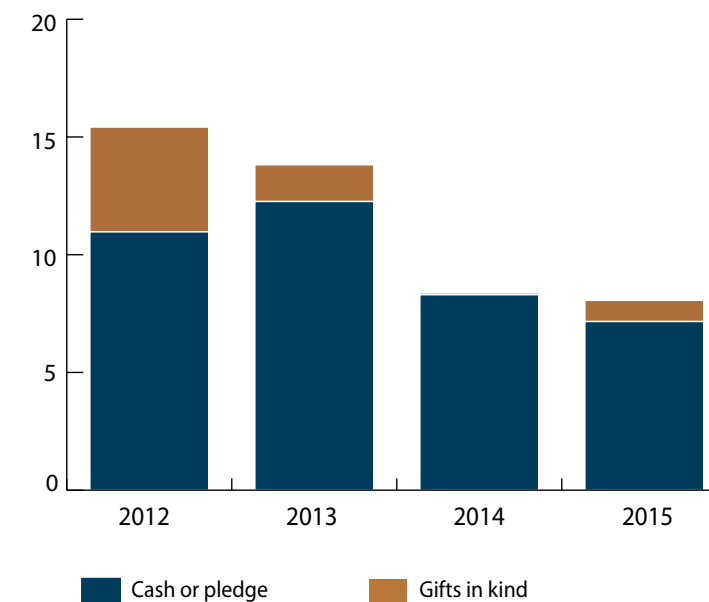
Sources of Funds

Philanthropic giving encompasses cash or pledged gifts, realized revenue from planned gifts, annual donation solicitation and gifts in kind (donation of land, conservation easements or goods). Due to the size and complexity of some major gifts, several months may elapse from the donor's initial expression of interest to the finalization of the gift or pledge. DUC's development staff work closely with the donor through this process. Annual donation solicitation is principally executed through DUC's direct response program – either electronically or by mail.

Gifts in kind arise from a variety of sources, but the largest values historically come from gifts of land. Due to their nature, gifts in kind must be supported by appropriate valuations or appraisals. Philanthropic gifts from individuals result in the issue of a tax receipt for the value of the donation. Total gifts in kind in 2015 of \$639,000 (2014: \$75,000) represent land donations recorded directly to net assets. Therefore, these are not included as philanthropic fundraising revenue on the Statement of Revenue and Expenses and Net Assets available for current conservation activities.

Cash and pledged major gifts in 2015 of \$7.8 million (2014: \$9.3 million) included Bayer Crop Science for \$1.2 million, and gifts from John Childs of \$500,000 (USD) and Robert Kenny of \$225,000. DUC received a \$750,000-pledge from Trans-Canada and a \$500,000 pledge from ConocoPhillips Canada in 2014.

Philanthropic Activity (\$ millions)



Major gifts may be deferred until the pledged amount is collected or to fund expenses of a future period when directed by the donor, or both. Previously deferred amounts are recognized as revenue in the year in which they are used to fund conservation program expenses.

Philanthropic expenses increased by \$0.2 million to \$2.6 million in 2015 compared to \$2.4 million in 2014.

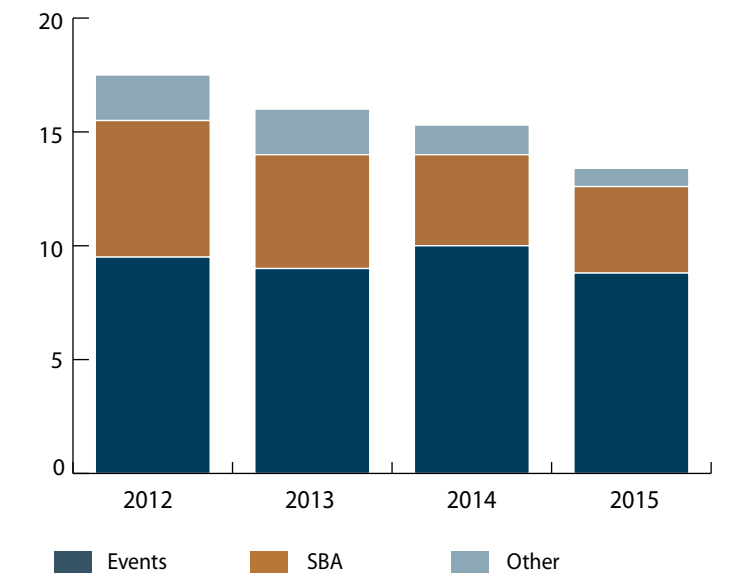
Philanthropic fundraising efficiency measures the percentage of gross philanthropic activity available to fund conservation mission priorities after paying philanthropic fundraising expenses. Due to the timing and size of some gifts, the efficiency ratio can vary year over year. However, the organization strives to keep its efficiency at or above 80%. The efficiency ratio was 67% in 2015 (2014: 74%) due to an investment into additional development staff leading up to a campaign.

Grassroots fundraising includes community-based fundraising activities like dinner events (Events), sealed bid auctions (SBA) of framed print art, cause marketing and a variety of online auction or similar fundraising initiatives. Funds raised in this manner typically do not result in a tax receipt being issued to contributors. Organized by a large network of volunteers, DUC annually hosts more than 400 community fundraising dinners across Canada, which bring together existing and potential supporters as well as casual attendees. Dinner attendees purchase merchandise through a variety of on-site raffles and auctions, the net proceeds of which are used to support DUC's conservation programs.

About 1,150 businesses across Canada host SBA easels where supporters can purchase framed prints by artists such as famous wildlife artist Robert Bateman. Business owners volunteer their time and donate display space for these easels. The net proceeds of the auction are used to support DUC's conservation programs.

DUC's 110,799 supporters, including 5,289 volunteers, make these grassroots fundraising programs a success. They are supported by DUC's network of fundraising staff and support systems.

Grassroots Gross Revenue (\$ millions)



Grassroots fundraising revenue decreased from \$15.4 million to \$13.4 million in 2015. Across Canada, 424 events were held drawing more than 58,000 attendees. The competition in both the event and SBA programs is leading DUC to look at unrestricted revenue sources under a new lens.

Grassroots fundraising efficiency measures the percentage of net revenue available to fund conservation mission priorities after paying fundraising expenses. Since grassroots fundraising expenses are relatively fixed, the efficiency measure is sensitive to underlying changes in net grassroots fundraising revenue. The fundraising efficiency ratio is 10% before allocating information technology support and supporter services costs (2014: 10%).

Fundraising expenses decreased by \$1.7 million in 2015. Therefore, efficiency remained flat in 2015. This reflects the lower revenue and lower merchandise costs.

Donations from other non-government organizations increased slightly to \$11.9 million in 2015 (\$10.6 million in 2014).

Program and other revenue decreased by \$4.9 million in 2015 to \$10.9 million. This reflects a decrease in revenues from industry for environmental mitigation expenditures, offset by higher revenues from DUC's Native Plant Solutions program due to increased activity in naturalization projects in urban environments.

DUC generates investment income from long-term investments such as its future habitat management fund and the future development fund. While the capital of these funds is internally restricted and not available to be spent, the income from these funds can be used to support eligible expenditures such as habitat asset management. Investment income decreased by \$3.2 million in 2015, to \$15.0

million, comprised of realized and unrealized gains, interest and dividends. The large swing in unrealized gains is attributable to underlying success in the investment markets rather than any fundamental change in investment philosophy.

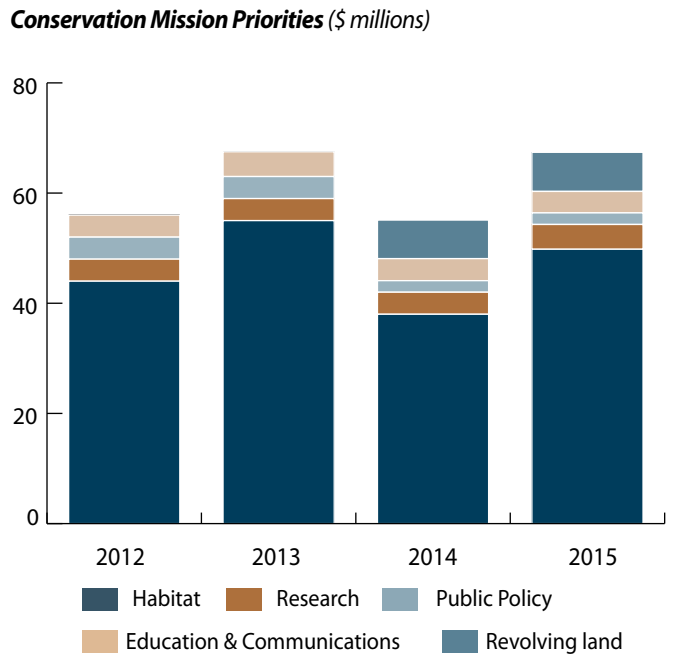
Government grants arise from a variety of government sources, including \$22.7 million from the U.S. (federal and state, level with 2014) and \$9.9 million from Canada (federal, provincial and municipal, an increase of \$3.9 million over 2014). Grants from the U.S. federal government form part of multi-year funding arrangements. The current arrangement expires on March 31, 2018.

The increase in the Canadian government grants is due to the National Wetland Conservation Fund.

Uses of Funds

Conservation mission priorities include: habitat conservation; scientific research; public policy; and education based on DUC’s strategic plan.

Expenditures on conservation mission priorities fluctuate based on revenues available in any given year, or the availability of projects to invest in.



About 84% of total expenditures, including investments into revolving land, were invested directly in habitat conservation in 2015. The investment in conservation habitat includes: \$20 million to secure habitats through land purchase or conservation easements (which include both conservation program expenditure and the purchase of land now capitalized on the Statement of Financial Position); \$24.4 million to enhance or restore the habitat’s functionality; and \$12.5 million for an ongoing program of habitat management, level with 2014.

It is neither practical nor cost effective for DUC to secure and protect habitat exclusively through direct ownership or conservation easements. Therefore, DUC also works collaboratively with various levels of government, industry and landowners to develop and implement conservation policies aimed at directly or indirectly conserving waterfowl habitat. In 2015, DUC invested about 3% of its mission expenditures on public policy work or about \$2.1 million, level with 2014. Successful policy also allows DUC to secure fee-for-service work in the environmental mitigation industry.

In 2015, DUC leveraged its investments to increase its revolving land program and conservation footprint. In 2014, DUC secured a \$5-million line of credit specifically for the revolving land program in Alberta with ATB (Alberta Treasury Branch) along with an annual gift of up to \$100,000 from ATB to cover interest on the loan. In 2015, DUC secured a line of credit with The Conservation Fund (a U.S.-based organization) to continue expanding the revolving land program outside of Alberta. Given the fluctuation in the exchange rate, DUC secured a credit line with CIBC to replace The Conservation Fund.

Land purchased for a long-term hold with revenue not specifically restricted for land purchases is recorded as a transfer to net assets below the “excess of revenue over expenses” line. Land purchased for long-term hold with revenue restricted specifically for land is recorded directly to net assets (both the revenue and the land). Land purchases financed by debt are not recorded on the Statement of Revenue and Expenses. These purchases total \$6.8 million.

The revolving land program is a strategy where land is not retained by DUC, but is purchased, restored and sold with a conservation easement on the title (see page 17).

DUC’s habitat conservation program is based on science. DUC’s Institute for Wetland and Waterfowl Research (IWWR) accounted for about 6% of total conservation expenditures or \$3.9 million, slightly lower than 2014.

DUC also recognizes the importance of public education to achieving its conservation mission. DUC invested about 7% or about \$4.5 million of its total conservation effort on education and communications in 2015 to promote the value and importance of wetlands and waterfowl habitat as part of a healthy environment. DUC’s education programs also include the operation of interpretive centres at Oak Hammock Marsh, Man.; Shubenacadie, N.S.; and Fredericton, N.B.

See pages 16 to 45 for a detailed review of conservation programs undertaken in 2015.

Administration includes a national management team and the legal services, accounting, treasury, human resources and national communications required to support DUC’s approximately 370 staff (full-time equivalents) operating across Canada. Information Technology costs are allocated to Conservation, Fundraising and Administration in the amount of \$1.8 million, \$337,000 and \$173,000 respectively (2014: \$1.5 million, \$278,000 and \$126,000 respectively). DUC strives to ensure that administration forms less than 10% of its total expenditures on conservation mission and administration combined.

Administration costs increased by \$0.6 million to \$5.5 million in 2015 from \$4.9 million in 2014. During the year, DUC purchased an annuity to fund the pension obligation related to retired members of its pension plan and transferred the related pension obligation to a third party. DUC supplemented the cost of the annuity with a \$6.5-million term loan. The \$142,000 interest on that loan is included in administration costs. The pension-related expense, driven by a lower interest rate, was higher in 2015 than 2014.

Cash Flow

For the year ended March 31, 2015, cash provided by operating activities was \$7.5 million (2014: \$4.7 million). Cash provided by financing activities was \$12 million (2014: cash used \$2 million). Cash used in investing activities was \$15.9 million (2014: \$8.2 million), which resulted in an increase in cash of \$3.5 million (2014: decrease of \$1.5 million) to \$15.3 million. These cash reserves, along with contributions receivable and other short-term receivables, represent contributions by donors deferred to fund conservation expenses of a future period.

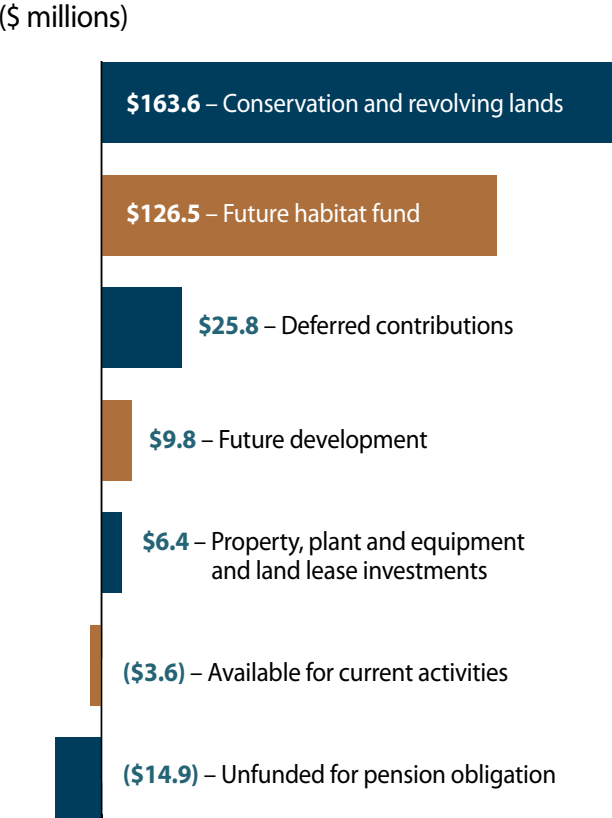
Statement of Financial Position

In 2015, DUC’s assets increased by \$33.0 million to \$365.4 million. The investment in revolving and conservation lands in 2015 was \$10.5 million. Investments also increased by \$20 million due to earnings on investments of \$15 million plus a \$7-million transfer from cash to secure GICs to provide collateral for the loan related to the pension.

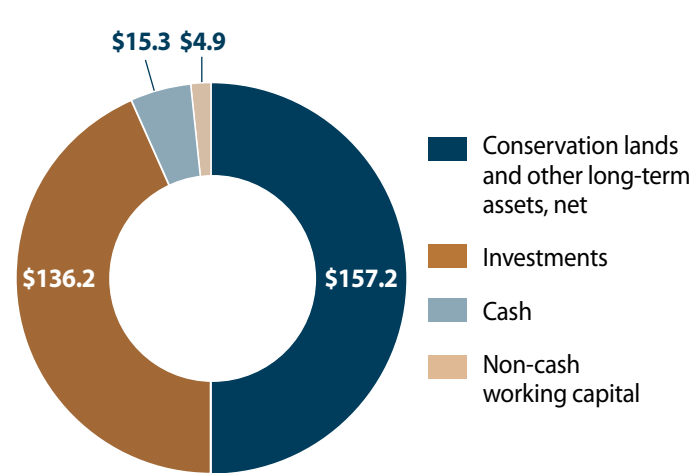
At March 31, 2015, DUC held about \$25.8 million in deferred operating contributions. These funds have external restrictions imposed by donors and partners on the type of conservation expenditures they may be used for in the future.

DUC also holds about \$9.8 million in reserves for future conservation opportunities, a total of \$163.6 million is invested in conservation lands and revolving lands and \$6.4 million is invested in property, plant and equipment. In 2015, DUC has negative unrestricted net assets of (\$3.6) million. This year, the curtailment of the pension liability resulted in a loss and requirement to pay a third party \$60 million in pension assets plus \$6.5 million for which a term-loan was secured. Due to the current economic environment, including low interest rates, DUC has taken steps to reduce risk in terms of its pension plan.

Net Assets & Deferred Contributions



Invested In



Financial Summary

Ducks Unlimited Canada condensed statements of financial position

(in thousands of dollars) | As at March 31

	2015	2014
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash	\$ 15,255	\$ 11,741
Other current assets	27,322	26,615
	42,577	38,356
Long-term receivables	5,736	6,915
Investments	136,151	116,325
Revolving land	13,903	9,753
Property, plant and equipment, net	8,759	9,149
Conservation lands	158,244	151,938
	\$ 365,370	\$ 332,436
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current liabilities	\$ 39,734	\$ 24,937
Accrued pension and other post-employment benefits	14,954	11,442
Non-current deferred contributions and unearned revenue	17,499	15,780
Obligation under capital lease	5,439	--
	77,626	52,159
Net assets:		
Internally restricted	121,845	113,469
Invested in land held for resale, property, plant and equipment and conservation lands	169,518	164,810
Unrestricted	(3,619)	1,998
	287,744	280,277
	\$ 365,370	\$ 332,436

These condensed financial statements do not contain all of the disclosures required by Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. Readers are cautioned that these statements may not be appropriate for their purposes. For more information on the Company's financial position, results of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows, reference should be made to the complete financial statements of Ducks Unlimited Canada as at and for the years ended March 31, 2015 and March 31, 2014, on which Ernst and Young expressed an opinion without reservation in their report dated June 14, 2015. Visit ducks.ca/annualreport

Ducks Unlimited Canada condensed statements of revenue and expenses and changes in unrestricted net assets

(in thousands of dollars) | For the years ended March 31

	2015	2014
Revenue		
Philanthropic fundraising	\$ 7,292	\$ 12,231
Grassroots fundraising	13,439	15,406
Non-government partnership	11,863	10,643
Government grants	32,628	28,006
Program and other	10,910	15,787
Investment income	14,950	18,214
	91,082	100,287
Expenses		
Conservation program	\$ 54,693	\$ 53,714
Fundraising	15,622	17,279
Administration	5,521	4,923
	75,836	75,916
Excess of revenue over expenses for the year	15,246	24,371
Transfers from unrestricted net assets	(20,863)	(26,699)
Change in unrestricted net assets	(5,617)	(2,328)
Opening balance unrestricted net assets	1,998	4,326
Closing balance unrestricted net assets	\$ (3,619)	\$ 1,998

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Chief Financial Officer



Ducks Unlimited Canada
Conserving Canada's Wetlands

