

Atlantic Coastal Region

\$16 million



DUC'S CONSERVATION ACTIONS IN THE ATLANTIC COASTAL REGION ARE FOCUSED ON THE HABITATS AND ECOSYSTEMS THAT ARE CRITICAL TO THE FUTURE OF WATERFOWL AND PEOPLE.

COASTAL MARSHES AND THE agricultural lands in the coastal plains provide the keystone habitat in Atlantic Canada. Coastal plains are a complex mix of salt marshes, estuaries, tidal mud flats, islands, saline ponds, rock and beach shoreline as well as offshore areas. Although not always found on the coast, the productive agricultural lands of coastal watersheds are also key components of the Atlantic Coastal Plains. Urban, recreational, agricultural and industrial developments have impacted these coastal habitats to varying degrees. Significant wetland loss has occurred in this area. For instance, an estimated 65 per cent of the salt marshes in the Bay of Fundy have been dyked and converted to other land uses.

The Atlantic coastal plains support a diverse waterfowl community including dabbling, diving and sea ducks as well as geese. Key species include black duck, blue-winged teal and common eider. Millions of sea birds also use this area throughout the year and an estimated

4.8 million shorebirds travel through the Atlantic provinces every fall. All groups of birds depend on coastal habitat for critical food supplies.



DUC'S GOAL IN ATLANTIC CANADA is to protect, restore and manage over 266,000 acres of critical habitat in the Coastal Plain – encompassing the most important waterfowl habitats in the Maritimes. Along with these intensive

activities are strategic efforts to improve conservation policies and land use practices. In combination, this integrated suite of programs is essential to the long-term health and productivity of the Coastal Plain. Delivering these results requires \$16 million in funding over the next six years for the purchase of land, the securing of long-term conservation agreements, the support of habitat restoration and to firmly establishing wetland conservation activities within the agricultural sector.

The challenges of waterfowl conservation are complex, and in some cases we must learn more about a species, including its habitat and lifecycle needs. In Newfoundland and Labrador we are racing against time to uncover the mystery behind the steep declines in the common eider population. Our Eider Initiative includes groundbreaking research on these important sea ducks, and the results of our work are crucial to making timely and proper decisions for the future of the species in this region. 🦆