



Beauval project set for waterbird and wetland research in Saskatchewan's boreal forest

Ducks Unlimited Field Office, Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, August 9, 2004

The Meadow Lake area has long been known as an important region for waterbirds. Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) has developed over 150 wetland conservation projects in the area, and is now about to embark on a massive inventory project to expand their knowledge of waterbirds and boreal wetlands throughout northwestern Saskatchewan. Over the next five years the project will include habitat mapping, waterbird surveys and the collection of information on water.

This summer, DUC biologists will be collecting information on upland and wetland habitat in the Meadow Lake area. Helicopter crews will be working out of Buffalo Narrows, Pinehouse, Beauval and Green Lake and expect to complete the project by late August. This information will help in the development of a satellite-based habitat map of the 5.3 million hectare (13.2 million acre) project area that DUC has named the "Beauval Project". The Beauval project area includes the Churchill River and the marshes along its shores, the Canoe, Kazan and Lavalee lakes, and the Beauval marshes.

Over 50 million hectares of boreal forest habitat have been and are currently being mapped in ten other DUC inventory projects from the Yukon to Manitoba. A project similar to Beauval in size and waterfowl values called the Pasquia Project was recently completed on the Saskatchewan-Manitoba border near Hudson Bay.

The Beauval Project will help DUC and its partners better understand boreal wetlands and how industrial and agricultural pressures might be affecting them. "Partnerships are key to ensuring that the results from this exciting project are available to resource managers", explained Brent Friedt, DUC conservation programs specialist in Melfort, Saskatchewan. "This science based information combined with local knowledge will help guide management decisions as they relate to water and wetlands in Saskatchewan's boreal forest "

Partnership development is currently ongoing and there is a strong interest in Saskatchewan for this important conservation work. Discussions with governments, Aboriginal groups, the forest industry and other conservation organizations are ongoing and have been positive.

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Or visit: www.ducks.ca/conserv/wbf

There will be a figure inserted outlining the project area.